A. Winton.

Old Corn Gems

NUMBER SEVENTY-THREE

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All Things Work for Good

Romans 8:28.

If our Father's gracious promise
Was more clearly understood,
That his daily dealing with us
Works together for our good;

How the burdens that are pressing
Hard upon us would grow light,
And each trial prove a blessing
Were our trust in him complete.

If our hearts were always lightsome,
And we knew no anxious care,
We might overlook the sorrow
That surrounds us everywhere.

If our stores were overflowing,
Then, perhaps, we never would
Learn to sympathize with others
Who are lacking daily food.

Knowing he is always "for us"
We, as children of his grace,
Can afford to bear with patience
"Trusting where we cannot trace."

He will surely **guard the issue**
Of **each test,** though it may seem
Hard to bear; its object always
Is to draw us **close to him.**

So whatever may befall us
We who love him always should
Know the Lord is overruling
All that happens us, for good.—Z. '06:182.

A Little While

A little while, and I shall see Him, whom not having seen I love.
This grand prospect, daily, hourly, holds my heart on things above:
Now by faith, I'm pressing onward in the footsteps of my Lord,
Rough the pathway, steep and narrow, 'tis the path my Master trod.

Oh, the rapture of that meeting, Oh, what ecstasy 'twill bring,
When with open, perfect vision I shall gaze upon my King!
I shall feast upon the beauty of the One I love so well,
And with tongue no longer stammering, all my love for Him I'll tell.

Soon, and I will see the Father, when the Son with loving pride,
Shall conduct me to His presence, with the rest of His dear Bride.
What a sense of awe will fill me, as with unveiled face I gaze
On that grand and mighty Being, whom all Heaven unites to praise!

Shall I know myself, I wonder, when He takes me to His heart,
And of all that heavenly glory I shall find myself a part?
Heaven not complete without me, mine, eternities of bliss?
Oh, my soul, thou must not stagger, for thy God hath promised this!

Oft a secret fear assails me, that I may be left behind;
Then I bid my soul take courage, 'tis that Enemy of mine!
He would use to cause my downfall censure sharp, or flattering breath,
For he hates God's holy children with a hatred strong as death.

But my Father will not leave me to his mercy, but prepare
Heavenly armor to protect me, which, if I will always wear,
Every fight will prove me victor, as I wield the two-edged Sword,
World and flesh and powers of evil, all must fall before His Word!

Oh, my soul, thy life dependeth on thy faithfulness alone;
While the days and hours are passing, art thou holding fast thy crown?
Keep this thought before thee always, let it daily strengthen thee,
"A little while decides forever thine eternal destiny!"

Then the thought, Oh! how it thrills me, any day He may send word—
"Child, thy work on earth is finished, enter into thy reward."
But, if I need further testings, crosses heavy, trial sore,
I can wait, **for at the longest, it is but a short while more.**—Z. '12:362.

God will have none others in the Kingdom than those who are character-likenesses of Jesus.—Z. '16:26.

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OLD CORN GEMS

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"And they did eat of the OLD CORN of the land on the morrow after the Passover . . . and the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the OLD CORN of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year." Joshua 5:11-12.

A SAFE RULE

"WHERE A BROTHER GIVES AN INTERPRETATION OF A SCRIPTURE WHICH DIFFERS FROM THAT GIVEN BY BROTHER RUSSELL, AND BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION SEEMS REASONABLE AND IN HARMONY WITH THE PLAN OF GOD, THEN WE BELIEVE IT A SAFE RULE TO FOLLOW BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION, FOR THE REASON THAT HE IS THE SERVANT OF THE CHURCH, SO CONSTITUTED BY THE LORD FOR THE LAODICEAN PERIOD; AND THEREFORE WE SHOULD EXPECT THE LORD TO TEACH US THROUGH HIM. WHERE THERE ARISES A DOUBT IN THE MIND AS TO WHICH INTERPRETATION IS CORRECT, THEN IT IS ALWAYS SAFER TO RESOLVE THAT DOUBT IN FAVOR OF BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION. WE BELIEVE SUCH TO BE IN HARMONY WITH THE LORD'S WILL." Z. '18:51.

Followers of Jesus: Cross-Bearers

"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."—Matt. 16:24.

"IF ANY man will come after me," signifies, If any man desires to be a follower of mine, to walk in my steps of obedience to the Father's will, and to share with me in the Father's reward. Such are to know that the cost of such discipleship will be cross-bearing. Cross-bearing signifies endurance of trials, difficulties, disappointments—the crossing of the human will and preferences by circumstances and conditions permitted of the Father. Our Lord's will was fully submitted to God, so that it was his delight to do the Father's will, and this must be our attitude to commence with; but after this consecration has taken place comes the trial and testing. If we were in heaven, where all is in full accord with the divine will, we could have no crosses from the time we fully consecrated to the Lord; because our wills being in accord with the Father's will and with all righteousness, and there being nothing in heaven contrary to that which is right, we would be in accord with everything, and everything would be in accord with our newly consecrated minds. Our crosses come because we are living in "this present evil world," because the spirit of the world is contrary to the Lord and his Spirit of righteousness and equity, and because our Adversary, Satan, seeketh continually to stumble and ensnare us; because, also, our new wills are circumscribed and hindered and opposed by the desires of our natural bodies, which are more or less in accord with the things of this present time, its conditions, its aims, its sentiments; and because the new will strives to use the body in a manner and in a service which, under present evil conditions, continually causes it annoyance and suffering. These things are to be taken into consideration as the cost of discipleship—the cost of a share in the Kingdom and its glory, honor and immortality, promised to the "called, chosen and faithful."

"God Kindly Veils Our Eyes"

It is fortunate for us that in the outstart we do not, can not, estimate or appreciate the full meaning of the words, sacrifice, cross-bearing, etc. If we could look into the future and see from the start the various trials and difficulties to be encountered in the "narrow way," doubtless few of us would have the courage to make the consecration and the start—if we could not see or appreciate, beforehand, the rewards and blessings which under divine providence come to us in connection with every trial—more than compensating us for every earthly self-denial and endurance. Nor can we in advance appreciate how the Lord wishes to test our zeal and our faith, by letting us come to the crosses of life one at a time, and letting us see their ruggedness,—hiding from us the assisting hand by which, as soon as we take hold of the cross and put forth our efforts, our Lord lifts the real weight of it, so that we have no more at any time than we are able to bear. So careful is he of all those who thus become his footstep followers and cross-bearers, and prospectively his joint-heirs in the Kingdom, that he will not "suffer them to be tempted above that they are able, but with the temptation will provide also a way of escape."—1 Cor. 10:13.

Sacrificing Precedes Cross-Bearing

The first step in following the Lord is properly designated in the Scriptures a sacrifice; but it is not a taking up of the cross. When we sacrifice our wills, when we submit ourselves fully to the Lord, it is the sum of all sacrifice—in the sense that the giving up of the will means the surrender of our all to the Lord, that his will may be done in respect to all our affairs. The will is the individual, the ego, and holds the command, the rulership of our time, influence, abilities, and every talent; hence the surrender of the will to God means a surrender of all these things to him. All subsequent sacrifices which we may make in the Lord's service are included in and represented by this sacrifice of the will. If the will changes, draws back, ceases to be obedient to God, ceases to be submissive to his arrangements, the whole condition changes and the relationship to God as a member of the body of Christ terminates. But if the will continues faithful to God and desirous of serving him and his cause, though the service and cross-bearing be not done faithfully, the Lord will carry such through, and by chastisements and corrections in righteousness they shall ultimately be "saved so as by fire"—by tribulation. This is the essence of the doctrine of "the final perseverance of the saints." So long as they continue to be consecrated—to have their wills sanctified to the Lord—they continue to be his, even should they, from lack of zeal, fail to win the prize offered to the zealous, the "overcomers."

But if the will remain loyal to the Lord, and the crosses are approached and lifted and borne in faith and trust, not only will the Lord's grace suffice, but his comfort and assistance will be given in the narrow way:—so that its trials and difficulties may be esteemed as "light afflictions, but for a moment." Eventually this class shall be the victors, joint-heirs with the Master in his Kingdom, because by his assisting grace they shall have walked in his footsteps faithfully, even unto death—and that with greater ease and peace and joy and satisfaction than others who with less zeal seek to avoid the crosses of their consecration.

The statement that the consecration of the will—its surrender, its sacrifice, that the Lord's will may be received instead—is not one of the crosses we are called on to bear, may need further explanation. In order for the sacrifice of our wills to be acceptable to the Lord at all, it must be no cross to us: the desire to give up our own will and to accept God's will must be a joy, a pleasure. Our wills must be sacrificed willingly, else the sacrifice will not be accepted of the Lord, and we shall have neither part nor lot with him. Unless the will be joyfully resigned to the Lord's will, all subsequent sacrificing or cross-bearing will count nothing whatever to our advantage. Our Master's expression respecting the surrender, the sacrifice, of his will to do the Father's will, illustrates this matter clearly; and it will be noticed from the language that there was no cross connected therewith.

Our Lord's sentiments were, "I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart." (Psa. 40:8.) And so all who would be his disciples must not only count the cost of cross-bearing because of the opposition of the world, the flesh and the devil, but they must have a somewhat similar spirit to that of our Lord in connection with the sacrificing of their wills; they, too, must delight to have God's will done in them—delight to surrender or sacrifice their own wills. Let us see this clearly, and if there is anything lacking in respect to the sacrifice of our wills let us give it our first attention. He who has completely sacrificed his will to the Lord's will has gained the victory at the start which will make all the remainder of the "narrow way" comparatively easy. He who has merely hacked and mutilated his will instead of killing it outright, will find extra difficulty at every step of his journey, and can never gain the victory until he has finished the sacrifice which he imperfectly began.

In What Does Cross-Bearing Consist?

The Master's cross-bearing did not consist in fighting the weaknesses of the flesh, for he had none; nor are these weaknesses of the flesh our crosses. Because all our weaknesses of the flesh are fully covered by the merit of our Lord's sacrifice; our standing before God is as New Creatures and not as imperfect fleshly creatures—the imperfections of the flesh, which are contrary to our wills and opposed by them, being fully pardoned by the Lord. The Lord's cross-bearing consisted in the **doing of the Father's will under unfavorable conditions.** This course brought upon him the envy, hatred, malice, strife, persecution, etc., of those who thought themselves to be God's people, but whom our Lord, who read their hearts, declared to be of their father, the devil. We are not able to read the hearts of those about us who profess to be the Lord's people, yet we may be sure that there are plenty still who profess the name of God and of Christ and who have none of his Spirit and are not his children, but are the children of the Adversary,—begotten of an evil spirit.

Since we are walking in the same "narrow way" that our Master walked, we may reasonably expect that our crosses will be of similar kind to his—oppositions to our doing the will of our Father in heaven—oppositions to our serving his cause and letting the light shine out as our Master and Leader directed. It is a pleasure for us to do the Father's will—no cross about that. We delight not only to consecrate our wills, but the Lord's law of righteousness is in our hearts to such an extent that we delight to serve the right, the Truth. Our cross-bearing comes when we find that the Truth, so beautiful to us, so charming, is hated by others and draws upon us their anger, malice, hatred, as the same truths drew the same opposition upon our Master. Our faithfulness in cross-bearing consists in our willingness to stand up for the Truth and for every principle of righteousness;—meekly, humbly, yet firmly, speaking the truth in love, no matter what the cost of friendships broken or enmities enkindled, or evil words spoken against us falsely for the Truth's sake.

Our Master forewarned us of just such experiences when he spoke of our crosses in following him. He was explaining the matter more fully when he said, "Marvel not if the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you." "If ye were of the world the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." If they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub,—prince of devils,—think it not strange if they will call his followers by evil names also. Yea, he forewarned us, "They shall say all manner of evil against you, falsely, for my sake." He even implied that some who are not children of the devil would be found amongst the persecutors of the cross-bearers, and assured us that some of these would verily think that they were doing God service. And are they not doing God and us also a service in the sense that Satan is serving God's purposes in the present time, in the persecution of the Church;—in making her path a "narrow" one, and filling it with difficulties; that thus the Lord's faithful cross-bearers might be tested and proven, and that he might thus select and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works and zealous of the Truth?

Cross-Bearers Must Battle With the Flesh, Also

While we pointed out, foregoing, that cross-bearing is quite separate from battling with the weaknesses of the flesh, nevertheless whoever has the mind of Christ, whoever is seeking to be a cross-bearer and to stand up as a representative of the Lord and the Truth in the midst of a wicked and perverse generation, as an ambassador of God, will surely realize that he could not be an acceptable ambassador and could not claim that his will is sacrificed to the Lord's will, if he did not strive against the weaknesses and imperfections in himself as well as stand for the general principles of righteousness and truth everywhere. The Apostle included this thought and much more in this expression,—"He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked." (1 John 2:6.) He is to walk as our Lord walked, in his general deportment and relationship to everything that is good; and correspondingly to avoid everything that is evil. He is to walk as nearly as possible in the footsteps of Jesus.

This, however, does not mean that he either should or could, in an imperfect body, walk up to all the perfection of his Lord, who even in the flesh was perfect. It means just what it says, that we should walk as he walked—in the same way, in the same direction, toward the same mark and standard that he recognized and established. The Apostle Paul gives us a suggestion along this line, very helpful when rightly understood. His words are, "The righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit." (Rom. 8:4.) To walk after the flesh is to walk after sin—to knowingly, willingly, intentionally, do those things which we recognize to be contrary to the divine will, even though we should not go to the extreme of wickedness. So, likewise, to walk after the Spirit does not mean to walk **up to the standard** of the Spirit, which would be impossible for us who were born in sin, shapen in iniquity, and thus blemished by sin according to the flesh. As "New Creatures" we are living in the earthly tabernacle, which is imperfect; and so long as we are thus limited, we cannot do all that we would. As "New Creatures," begotten of the holy Spirit, we desire to do perfectly. We desire that every thought, word and act should be perfect in the sight of our heavenly Father,—as perfect as were those of our dear Redeemer; but this we know from the Scriptures and from experience is impossible. We are glad, therefore, that the Lord shows us, as in this statement of the Apostle, that what he requires is that we should walk after the Spirit;—that he does not require of us that we should walk up to it, which would be an impossibility.

It is because we could not walk up to the Spirit, up to the perfect standard of the divine requirement, that God has mercifully provided an arrangement of **grace** on our behalf. By this grace, those who start as members of the body of Christ, to walk in the footsteps of Jesus—to walk henceforth not **after the flesh,** but on the contrary to walk **after the Spirit,** and as nearly as possible up to the Spirit's requirements—have their deficiencies made up for them by their Redeemer's meritorious sacrifice. The divine arrangement for this is a unique one, which adapts itself to the various conditions and circumstances of each and all called to walk in this narrow way. If one by reason of being well born and having a good environment has for this reason a better balanced and equipped mortal body in which the new mind can exercise itself with the greater freedom;—and if such a one by reason of these advantages be able to walk nearer to the Spirit's standard than a less favored brother, whose will, however, is equally loyal to the Lord, the divine arrangement is that each shall have imputed to him **grace sufficient,**—so that both may be counted perfect—counted as having walked up to the Spirit's requirements.

This matter may be more clearly before our minds if we imagine a scale marked off from naught (0) to one hundred (100)—a scale on which we will suppose moral stamina to be measurable, one hundred representing the full, complete character which God requires. On this scale imagine five brethren with different degrees of physical imperfections, yet all fully consecrated to the Lord, all seeking to the best of their ability to "walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit"—as nearly up to the full (one hundred) standard as possible. One has ten points of character, another twenty, another thirty, another forty, another fifty. From the Lord's standpoint, because they are all trusting in Christ and walking in his way, and seeking to do his will, they are all counted as up to the full standard, one hundred—all acceptable with the Lord—the weakest as well as the strongest of them. This wonderful divine arrangement for man's necessities tells of the wisdom of God as well as of his mercy and love. Who else could have devised such an equitable plan, by which whosoever cometh unto the Father through the Redeemer, with full consecration of heart, of will, and full intention of life, might be acceptable—nothing short of perfection being acceptable.

It is for this reason that we are told that we are reckonedly justified—"justified by faith." Mark now the words of the Apostle, "Where sin abounded, there did grace so much more abound." He here expresses a general principle of the divine arrangement. Those hearing the invitation and desiring to accept God's grace and call, are all thus put on an equality: he who has little character with many weaknesses and imperfections, has accredited to him of the Lord's grace and merit proportionately; he who has more of character naturally and who needs, therefore, less of grace, gets also according to his needs. But let it be clearly noted that there is "none righteous, no, not one"—none who can come up to the divine standard. All need to have the Lord's merit imputed to them, and hence the Lord makes giving up of the will means the surrender of our all to the Lord, that his will may be done in respect to all our affairs. The will is the individual, the ego, and holds the command, the rulership of our time, influence, abilities, and every talent; hence the surrender of the will to God means a surrender of all these things to him. All subsequent sacrifices which we may make in the Lord's service are included in and represented by this sacrifice of the will. If the will changes, draws back, ceases to be obedient to God, ceases to be submissive to his arrangements, the whole condition changes and the relationship to God as a member of the body of Christ terminates. But if the will continues faithful to God and desirous of serving him and his cause, though the service and cross-bearing be not done faithfully, the Lord will carry such through, and by chastisements and corrections in righteousness they shall ultimately be "saved so as by fire"—by tribulation. This is the essence of the doctrine of "the final perseverance of the saints." So long as they continue to be consecrated—to have their wills sanctified to the Lord—they continue to be his, even should they, from lack of zeal, fail to win the prize offered to the zealous, the "overcomers."

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This matter may be more clearly before our minds if we imagine a scale marked off from naught (0) to one hundred (100)—a scale on which we will suppose moral stamina to be measurable, one hundred representing the full, complete character which God requires. On this scale imagine five brethren with different degrees of physical imperfections, yet all fully consecrated to the Lord, all seeking to the best of their ability to "walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit"—as nearly up to the full (one hundred) standard as possible. One has ten points of character, another twenty, another thirty, another forty, another fifty. From the Lord's standpoint, because they are all trusting in Christ and walking in his way, and seeking to do his will, they are all counted as up to the full standard, one hundred—all acceptable with the Lord—the weakest as well as the strongest of them. This wonderful divine arrangement for man's necessities tells of the wisdom of God as well as of his mercy and love. Who else could have devised such an equitable plan, by which whosoever cometh unto the Father through the Redeemer, with full consecration of heart, of will, and full intention of life, might be acceptable—nothing short of perfection being acceptable.

It is for this reason that we are told that we are reckonedly justified—"justified by faith." Mark now the words of the Apostle, "Where sin abounded, there did grace so much more abound." He here expresses a general principle of the divine arrangement. Those hearing the invitation and desiring to accept God's grace and call, are all thus put on an equality: he who has little character with many weaknesses and imperfections, has accredited to him of the Lord's grace and merit proportionately; he who has more of character naturally and who needs, therefore, less of grace, gets also according to his needs. But let it be clearly noted that there is "none righteous, no, not one"—none who can come up to the divine standard. All need to have the Lord's merit imputed to them, and hence the Lord makes this arrangement for all who would approach him and accept his favor, his call to joint-heirship with his Son. They can have neither part nor lot in the matter until they have acknowledged their own imperfections and have accepted the imputed merits of our Redeemer, "In whom we have redemption through his blood."

All of the Lord's people—not all of the nominal church, not merely nominal disciples, but the true followers mentioned in the text—are not only walking in the same pathway, but similarly all find it narrow and difficult. Similarly all in this pathway have the same spirit, mind or disposition—to do the Father's will and to serve his cause. This is the Spirit of Christ, and by it all men may take knowledge of his disciples; they, like him, will be loyal to the principles of righteousness and truth. They will be willing to suffer opposition and persecution for the Truth's sake, for righteousness' sake, and thus with him to be cross-bearers.

The Apostle Paul brings out this thought when, writing to the Corinthians respecting Titus, he asks, "Walked we not in the same spirit? Walked we not in the same steps?" (2 Cor. 12:18.) Assuredly Paul and Titus must have been walking in the same spirit and the same steps if they were both walking in the Spirit and steps of the Master,—taking up life's crosses and following him. And this, dear brethren and sisters, will be true of each and all of us. While we each have our individual peculiarities and differences of temperament, conditions, surroundings, opportunities, etc., the same spirit and the same steps can be noted in all who are followers of the Lamb. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." If any man walk not in the footsteps of Jesus he is not one of his followers, in this special sense pointed out by our text, and consequently would not be one of the joint-heirs in the Kingdom. But let us keep in memory the Lord's assurance that his grace is sufficient for us, and that his strength is made perfect in our weakness, and that this is the victory that overcometh the world—even our faith.—Z. '03 ; 342-347.

"Know Them by Their Fruits"

"Be ye doers of the Word and not hearers only."—Jas 1:22.

ANTICIPATING our query respecting how we may know the true from the false our Lord says, "Ye shall know them by their fruits." He illustrates this by suggesting that grapes are not to be expected on thorn-bushes nor figs on thistles, although it is said that there is a thorn-bush in Palestine which grows a fruit somewhat resembling grapes, and a kind of thistle with heads shaped like figs. Nevertheless, no one was in danger of being deceived thereby, nor should any among the Lord's people be in doubt respecting the character and the fruitage of the life of those who are the followers of Christ.

The thought is that the Lord's true people are of such a kind that the fruit of their lives is nourishing and refreshing toward all who have fellowship with them. On the other hand there are persons who, thistle-like, are always scattering seeds that will cause trouble—false doctrines, evil surmisings and errors; and there are some who, like thorn-bushes, instead of bearing refreshing fruit, are continually reaching out to impede, to irritate, to annoy, to vex, to poison, to injure, those with whom they come in contact. The intimation clearly is that the Lord's people ought to have little difficulty in distinguishing between the false teachers who would mislead them and the under-shepherds who gladly lay down their lives in the service of the flock. The one class are continually mischief makers, underminers, destroyers. The other class are helpers, builders, strengtheners, peacemakers.

Not content with giving us a word-picture distinguishing between wolves and sheep, between injurious plants and fruitful ones, our Lord next institutes another illustration still more searching—contrasting a healthy fruit-tree with a diseased or evil one, contrasting a healthy Christian with a perverted and misguided one. He declares that a sound tree brings forth good fruit, but a corrupt or diseased tree brings forth undesirable, evil fruit. How we have all witnessed this in nature—the sound apples come from good apple trees that are in healthy condition. The knotty, wormy, unsatisfactory fruit comes from trees that are diseased, under-nourished, uncared for, unpruned, attacked by worms, etc.

In this illustration our Lord seems to refer to the fact that those who are his disciples, sound and proper enough to begin with, might become evil, might lose their spiritual strength and fruitfulness—their carefulness. Lack of nourishment in the soil would expose a tree to disease, blight. So the Christian, who would add to his attainment in knowledge, is liable to decline in spirituality unless he have spiritual nourishment of the right kind. As without pruning the tree would develop suckers, which would corrupt it and ultimately destroy its fruitfulness, so the Christian needs the disciplines, the prunings, that he may develop in character and the graces of the Spirit. Our Heavenly Father is the great husbandman and has promised us the proper care, yet it is not exactly with us as with the trees; for because of our higher endowment, our godlike quality of individuality, will, we are dealt with differently.

To a considerable degree it is for us to determine what nourishment we will have. The Lord supplies the good soil of Truth, the refreshing showers of grace, and the nourishment of precious promises, but it is for each of his people to use these and thereby to grow in grace, knowledge and love. We cannot, then, blame the Husbandman if we come short, and be unfruitful from lack of nourishment.

None of his good promises can fail: whatever failing there may be must be in ourselves. Likewise with the pruning—the Lord will send the chastisements, trials, difficulties; but with our independent will it is possible for us to pass these by and, failing to use them, fail to correct the weaknesses, shortcomings and wrong developments of our nature. It is possible with us, notwithstanding all the development or pruning we may receive, to set our affections on houses, lands, or earthly aims, objects or individuals, which, like the suckers in the illustration, would draw away our vitality and hinder our bearing of acceptable fruit.

The sound tree cannot bear poor fruit, nor the corrupted or decayed tree bring forth good fruit. While each of the Lord's people is to examine himself before the mirror of God's Word, to ascertain his own character, disposition, likeness or unlikeness to divine standards, nevertheless, in this matter of deciding about fruit, whether it be good or bad, each of the Lord's people is called upon to exercise judgment in regard to others as well as to himself—what are the results, the fruitage, the token of my own life, and what is the fruitage, results, token of my brother, my neighbor. Our Lord's intimation is that these tests are specially applicable to those who would be leaders of his flock. They should all be examples, bearers of good fruit, and these good fruits should be looked for as a test of good, sound character—a character fully in harmony with the Lord. True, all are imperfect, and with the best of intentions we cannot do all that we would, but the weakest of the Lord's brethren must bear some fruits that other brethren could discern, and these fruits should be accepted by the brethren according to the divine standard, viz., not of the flesh but of the spirit, the will, the intention. So, then, every true child of God should manifest before the brethren and before the world honesty, faithfulness of intention, a consecrated heart, mind, will, which would seek in all things to do the will of the Father in heaven.

In Palestine fruit trees are taxed, and hence a tree which will not bear, whose fruitage is poor, cannot be tolerated, for it would entail a loss instead of a revenue. Similarly, the assurance that the Lord will ultimately cast away every unfruitful one—"every branch in the vine that beareth not fruit he taketh away"—while every branch that beareth fruit is purged, that it may bring forth more fruit, is a further lesson along the same line.

Our Lord used a fig-tree to represent the Jewish nation, and pointed out that it was not bringing forth the desired fruitage, and that therefore it would be cut down and destroyed. The symbolical "fire" which utterly destroyed the Jewish nation made an end of their tree. The Jews will indeed receive a further blessing at the hand of the Lord, but, as he declares through the prophet, it will be "not by your Covenant." The blessing to come to Israel and all the nations in the future will be the New Covenant. Similarly, in the end of this Gospel age, not only will there be an individual test of the Lord's people as respects good and bad fruit, but Christendom as a whole, as a system, will be found unfruitful, unsatisfactory; and when the true saints of the Lord shall have been gathered out and glorified, the tree, the system as a whole, will go down, in the great time of trouble with which this age shall close and the new dispensation begin. Christendom will indeed be favored and blessed under the New Covenant of the Millennial age, but its special privileges and opportunities of the present time will be forever gone.

"I Never Knew You"

Continuing his discourse, our Lord implies eventually a great number of nominal followers devoid of his Spirit, not bringing forth the fruitage that he desires, not members of his called and chosen and faithful class, though outwardly, nominally, all of these. Of this class he says there shall be many. He points down to our day, saying, "in that day"—in the closing of this age, in the testing time, in the time when he shall come to make up his jewels and to glorify them as his Bride, his members, his associates in the Kingdom. Many at that time—in our day—will profess that they know the Lord, that they are prophesiers or teachers, that they are casting out devils, opposing sin and multitudinous forms of evil, and that they are carrying on mighty works in his name. The Revised Version gives, "by thy name," intimating that the name of Christ is used rather as a charm, to conjure by.

How true is this picture to the conditions of our day! How many take the Lord's name in vain, associating it with their enterprises, which are often in direct conflict with the Master's Word and Spirit. Why do they use his name? Simply as a talisman to conjure by, to increase their influence, to satisfy their own minds, to make themselves believe that in doing their own wills they are working the will of God. How true this is in respect to nearly all religious institutions of our day! . . .

But the testing time is near—the Lord will inquire respecting the fruit of these systems; he will not be deceived; yea, he will expose the bad fruit, that all may see that his judgment is just. It will be manifest that neglect of his Word has led to degeneracy, decay—that the suckers of worldly ambition, pride, wealth, show, etc., have been cultivated, notwithstanding all of the trying experiences which might have served to prune these.—Z. '06: 93, 94.

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Our Lord's commands are not put in the form of compulsion, but whoever **loves** Him will **serve** Him. Speaking through the Apostolic Epistles, and in the Book of Revelation, Jesus has given us various expressions of what righteousness is, what love is. Whoever, therefore, desires to be with Him, to reign with Him, should wish to **obey every hint** coming from Him. There is nothing put in the nature of an arbitrary command—merely the statement of principles. But these become to us **commands.** To **know His will** is a law to such as love Him—they **wish** to serve Him. This seems to be the Divine arrangement for this Age—that we should be left without a "thou shalt" or "thou shalt not," so as to prove the degree of our interest and loyalty.—Z. '14: 249.

Right Habits of Thought

"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report—if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."—Phil. 4:8.

AS THE mouthpiece of the Lord, the Apostle Paul is here giving instruction to the Church respecting how she should build herself up. Referring to the great influence of the mind over the body, he lays down certain rules for thinking; for as a man thinketh, so he will become. The more he thinks on good things, the better he will be. The more he thinks on evil things, the more evil he will be. The things we think about, the Apostle says, should be honorable, just, praiseworthy, beautiful. If a thing has none of these qualities the Lord's people should not think on it at all. A wonderful transformation of character is effected by thinking on those things which have wisdom and depth of instruction—those things which come from no one else but God.

"When the Spirit of Truth Is Come It Will Guide You Into All Truth"

St. Paul was the one privileged to see the Lord after his ascension. We perceive that he, as well as all the other Apostles, had fulfilled in him the Master's words, "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." (Matt. 18:18.) That is to say, the Apostles would be so guided by Divine wisdom that whatever they should declare necessary in life, would be upheld in heaven, and whatsoever they should declare unnecessary, would be so considered in heaven. Hence, the whole duty and responsibility of the Church is outlined by this Apostle. Whatever we see in the Old Testament Scriptures that is valuable to us, we perceive that our Lord through the Apostles has marked out.

Much that our Lord said was spoken in dark sayings. The exposition of some of these sayings and some of these particular instructions he left to the Apostles, under the direction of the Holy Spirit. The reason why Jesus did not give the explanation of the deeper and more spiritual things was that the disciples were not then spirit-begotten and could not understand these things; whereas, after their begetting of the Holy Spirit, they were able to understand the deeper things of the Word of God.

Our Lord said, "When he, the Spirit of Truth, is come, he will guide you unto all truth; . . . and he will show you things to come." (John 16:13.) This he has done through the writings of the Apostles and by believers all through the Gospel Age. Thus the Lord is making ready for the glorious consummation of our hope; and thus the Bride is making herself ready for the marriage of the Lamb, which will shortly take place.

"Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life." (Prov. 4:23.) These are inspired words of the wise king, Solomon, and it was evidently with the same thought in mind that the Apostle penned the words of our text. How beautiful this, the Apostle's final admonition to the Philippian Church, whom he addressed with affection as his "joy and crown"; and how much in keeping with the thought that **out of the heart are the issues of life!**

The heart represents the **will**, the intentions; the will must be kept true and centered in God, for it is the governing power of the whole man. Yet, though the will is the controlling power of man, it is also subject to influences. If the thoughts be impure, unjust, or unholy, the power of the will becomes more and more impaired. Hence the wisdom of the admonition of the Apostle as to what should be the character of our thoughts. In those who are striving to perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord—to adorn themselves with the beauty of holiness—the thoughts must not be neglected and permitted to browse in every pasture, but must be disciplined to feed upon pure and healthful food, as the Apostle directs.

The Truth of a Thing Is But One of the Tests

Is this **true,** or is it **false?** is the first question to be asked in the consideration of any matter. Love for the Truth lies at the very foundation of a righteous life, and whoever sympathizes with falsehood or exaggeration is more or less defiling himself; but whoever cleanses his thoughts is to that extent purifying his entire character. With our poor and imperfect brains there is great danger of our being misled; and hence the Word of God exhorts us earnestly that we should not touch that which we realize is untrue.

The truth of a thing, however, is but one of the tests to which we should subject every matter. Who does not know that there are many things that are true, and yet dishonorable, not worthy of our thoughts. The true, but dishonorable and unworthy things presenting themselves for our consideration are, perhaps, oftenest in connection with the weaknesses, the errors, the follies, or what not of our neighbors, our brethren. The dismissal of these thoughts, so unworthy, will leave us the opportunity and the energy, if we will, to spend upon things that are **honorable** as well as **true,** worthy of our attention as New Creatures in Christ Jesus.

"Things that are **just.**" Here we have another limitation. That which is **just** is that which is **right.** Justice and righteousness are synonymous terms. Very often that which is just is supposed to be the same as that which is lovely; as, for instance, The Golden Rule, "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you." This is not the rule of **love,** but of **justice.** We have no right to do unto others anything that we would not that they should do to us. In keeping the Golden Rule, therefore, we are not keeping the great Law of Love, but we are taking a step in the right direction. No one should begin to think about **love** until he is **just.** Love would be something more than that which is right. Love is more than justice. We have no right to expect more than justice. Whatever we receive more than justice is love, favor.

Justice Should Be the Rule of Our Lives

In thinking on those things suggested by the Apostle, we should think, first of all, on our own course. We should critically consider whether we are always thinking on these things which are right, just. We should never be prejudiced in the matter. Justice should be the rule of our lives, of our conduct. Again, in thinking on these things, we might naturally think in respect to the conduct of others. We could think about the influence, for instance, of various things. We could allow our minds to dwell much on the injustices practiced about us and elsewhere; on how much injustice is done in Africa against those who could rule themselves better; on how much injustice is done in business, etc. Thus there could be a great deal of muckraking. But this should not be the subject of our general thoughts. We should think of the good things, the higher things, the happier things; not only the good things of this life, but the blessed things of the life to come; and thus have our minds running along the lines of justice at all times.

We Should Not Wait for the Lord's Chastening Hand

No one can cultivate justice until he gets some appreciation of what it **is**. This necessary knowledge is obtained through the Scriptures. Some are born with a larger sense of justice than are others and some are born who seem to have no appreciation of right or wrong. But whether we have, naturally, a keen sense of justice or not, the Bible is the standard. As we know, the Scriptures say that we should do unto others as we would that they should do unto us; that we should forgive others as we would they should forgive us. When we have considered well these first lessons, then we are ready to cultivate justice and to put it into practice in our daily lives. This we do by asking in respect to our words and acts, Did I tell the **truth?** And was it **just** to tell it? Was it **right** to tell it? Was it in harmony with what I should wish others to tell in respect to **my affairs?** Did I do the right thing?

Whoever is in the school of Christ is there to study and practice along the lines of justice and of love. It is the work of a **life time**. We find that we can improve from day to day. We should not wait for the Lord to chasten us, but should be so desirous of having the Lord's will done in us that we would **scrutinize** our thoughts. We should walk circumspectly. We should think about what we are doing, about what we are thinking. We should not allow our thoughts to ramble. People who do so do not keep themselves under proper grip. The **will** dominates the life. First of all, we should make a full surrender to the Lord by giving him our wills, the control over our thoughts, our words, our actions. Those who have accepted the control of Christ over their affairs are not at liberty to act as they will. They are to be controlled by his Word, and to walk according to his rules. Our Master said, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another as I have loved you." (John 13:34.) This is more than justice. The Lord so loved the world that he laid down his life for them. So should we be ready and willing to lay down our lives for the brethren.

We are not to allow our minds to run along lines that would be unjust. We are to learn to apply this test of justice to every thought and word and act of ours, while learning at the same time to view the conduct of others, so far as reason will permit, from the standpoint of mercy, pity, forgiveness, helpfulness. But we cannot be too careful how we criticize every thought we entertain, every plan we may mature, that the lines of justice shall in no way be infringed by us with our heart's approval.

Our Minds Should Be Filled With That Which Is Pure and Lovely

In scrutinizing our thoughts from the viewpoint of **purity**, we should consider, first, the **nature** of the thoughts; and, second, their influence upon **others**. Not only should our thoughts be true and honorable and just and right, but they should be **pure**, and such as will not excite others to impurity. We should avoid anything that, while not impure in itself, might have the effect of arousing impurity in another. The Apostle's thought seems to be that we should guard our thoughts at all times.

"Whatsoever things are lovely" calls to our attention the fact that we should not allow our minds to **dwell** upon things that are not lovely, that are not praiseworthy. We might permit our **business** to so fill our thoughts that we would think continually about that particular thing; for instance, one interested in the iron business might always think about structural iron; another, about the coal business; another, about potatoes and codfish, etc. These things might be just enough, true enough, honorable enough, but constant thought on these lines is not profitable to the New Creature. When we are employed in digging, we should give attention to that business; when we are in the iron-work business, we should give proper attention to it. But when we are in the **thinking** business, we should not allow our minds to dwell on the things which the Apostle stipulates to be injurious. We must endeavor to bring our thoughts into subjection and train them along the lines that will transform us more and more into our Lord's glorious character likeness.

Our thoughts must not only be true, honorable and just, but they must be pure, they must be beautiful. By the word beautiful we understand, not only the thoughts relating to the beauties of nature, the flowers, the animal creation, the fruits, etc., but also and chiefly the things of **character**—the fruits and graces of the Holy Spirit—meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly-kindness, love. With these things our minds can become filled and enamored. If, on the contrary, we allow ourselves to neglect these things that are pure, just, lovely, we shall not grow in the fruits of the Spirit; but by thinking on these things and cultivating them in our hearts we become more and more God-like. If we do not cultivate these desirable qualities, then will be developed envy, hatred, strife, works of the flesh and of the Devil—the fruits contrary to righteousness.

In a word, then, we can hardly overestimate the importance of right thinking. There are on record instances of persons who were naturally depraved in mind, but who, by giving their attention to the things of the Truth, have become very noble characters, indeed. We can scarcely overestimate the power of the mind over the body. If we take pleasure in the cultivation of the fruits of the Spirit, they will prove a rich blessing to ourselves and to others. Thus we shall follow in the Master's footsteps and eventually become overcomers and associates with him in the Kingdom.

Purity of Thought an Essential

We are to love and cultivate that which is pure to such an extent that that which is impure will become painful to us, distressing, and we shall desire to drop it from memory. This will be accomplished only by continually thinking upon those things that are pure, and avoiding the giving of thought to the things that are impure. We are to recognize true loveliness and to esteem it. When we would think on the purest of things, we must of necessity lift our mental vision to as high a point as possible and, as nearly as we may be able, discern the loveliness of the perfect character of our God and of our Lord Jesus Christ and, proportionately, the loveliness manifested in one and another of the followers of Jesus who walk closely in his footsteps.

"If there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." While we should not think to praise ourselves nor to strive to obtain praise, yet we should strive to be praiseworthy. We should think about the praise of God. If there is anything that has any value, any merit, that has anything worthy of praise, we should recognize it. We should note in those about us, and particularly in the Church, the elements of character which are worthy of praise. We should not underestimate gentleness, faithfulness, patience. We should take note of constancy, of energy, of devotion to duty. We should not think of the trifling failures of others or of even their greater failures. If we continue to fill our minds with unhappy thoughts, we shall do injury to ourselves. As we continue to recognize the commendable things in our own lives and in the lives of those about us, we shall become the more God-like.

Things of any virtue, or value, things in any degree praiseworthy—the noble words, or noble deeds, or noble sentiments of anyone—we may safely meditate upon and, as a consequence, find ourselves growing toward those ideals upon which our minds, our new natures, thus feed.

Thus shall we become more and more transformed by the renewing of our minds, and approach nearer and nearer to the glorious likeness of our Master, being changed from glory to glory, inch by inch, step by step, little by little, during the present life; and our thoughts being in this attitude and our union with the Lord maintained, we shall have part in the First Resurrection, which will perfect us forever in the Lord's image and likeness.—Z. '11:165-167.

"They Go From Strength to Strength"

"Be ye filled with the Spirit."—Ephesians 5:18.

LET us consider together briefly these words of the Apostle Paul, addressed to the Church of Christ, the saints. They do not apply to those who are merely empty professors, having a form of godliness only, but to those who have fully accepted the terms of God's Call, who have made the full consecration which alone brings us into the position of sons of God. These are the only ones who have the Spirit of God. These only are begotten from Above. But St. Paul would have us remember that it is not sufficient that we receive the begetting of the Holy Spirit, which comes to us at the very entrance of the narrow way. We should see that the Holy Spirit of God abounds in us more and more as we go on in our Heavenward course. The little spark of the new mind should grow stronger and brighter day by day.

If this development does not take place, if we merely stand still, we shall soon begin to lose ground; but if we progress, the natural man will gradually perish and the new man will thrive. Christian development should be steady and continuous. We are to be more and more filled with the Spirit. Sometimes the Lord's children say, "I do desire to be filled with the Lord's Spirit, but it seems as if my capacity is so small. I wish to have His Spirit in large measure, but I am unable to be what I long to be. I am not satisfied with my attainments." But if we are striving earnestly and prayerfully to become like Christ, let us not be discouraged. Let us remember that if we keep filled to our present capacity, this very infilling will enlarge our capacity. Then our earthen vessel will hold more of the Holy Spirit. This, in turn, still further enlarges our capacity; and so the expanding and filling goes on. Thus it is possible for us to be filled continually.

If it were an impossibility for us to be filled with the Spirit of God, the inspired Apostle would not have so instructed us. To the truly consecrated child of God this is possible, and not only possible, but obligatory. But as there are ebbs and flows in the ocean tides, so with our sense of the Lord's presence with us and His smile upon us. We may not always realize His presence to a large degree, but the Lord's saints must learn to walk by faith, to trust Him and His abiding love and presence with us even though physical ill health or untoward outward circumstances or conditions may at times cause a mental depression. We are to rejoice in the Lord even though there may be for a time more or less heaviness of spirit.

Daily Self-Examination Necessary

In speaking of the glorious salvation of the Church the Apostle Peter says, "Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations [trials], that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ, whom having not seen ye love: in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." (1 Peter 1:6-8.) And we can thus rejoice even in the midst of severe trials that cause pain and tears. There may be times when it will seem as though we are more filled with the Spirit than at other times. But if we are striving earnestly to daily walk with God, this will not really be the case. It may be only a difference of surface feelings. The true child of the Lord should steadily progress.

The spirit, or disposition, of the world will seek to invade the dominion of the New Creature. But the New Creature must be on the alert to see that his mind and body are freed from everything that would not be in fullest harmony with God's Holy Spirit. Each one should seek to judge himself in this respect. We may not judge one another, but we should judge ourselves. We are to see to it that the Spirit of the Lord is manifest in our words, our thoughts and our conduct. We should be able to do this more and more successfully, more and more continually, as we go on in the good way and grow in grace and knowledge. This we shall do if we are watching, praying, striving, day by day.

The Spirit of the Lord dwelling in us in fulness, as it should be, will cause our entire being to be so absorbed by the principles of righteousness laid down in the Lord's Word, to be so in love with the Heavenly things, Heavenly hopes, Heavenly prospects, that everything else will be of no value to us. And this will be more and more our blessed experience if we continue faithfully in the narrow way, if we "follow on to know the Lord."

But if, on the contrary, we find ourselves making provision for the flesh, making worldly plans; if we find ourselves inclined to lay up treasures on earth instead of in Heaven, we should take alarm, and should ask ourselves whether we are deficient, whether we are neglecting the means of grace—prayer alone with God, study of His Word, meditation upon the glorious things to which we have been called, watching ourselves as to our growth in the fruits of the Spirit. If we find that we are considerably controlled by the spirit of contention, we should ask ourselves, "Are we seeking to deal justly and equitably with others—to give them their rights and not to intrude upon them? Are we cultivating the love which is forbearing, forgiving and kind?"—2 Timothy 2:24; Ephesians 4:31, 32.

If we find after close introspection that we are in full sympathy with the spirit of love. . . . If we find that we are controlled by this spirit of love, we may know that we are filled with the Spirit. This spirit of love will enlarge our hearts and minds, making us nobler day by day.

But we need to continually watch and pray; for there is constant danger otherwise that we may be tripped up or stumbled either by our own faults or those of others. We are never safe from being sidetracked unless we go often to the Throne of Grace; we cannot be filled unless we keep very close to the great Fountain from which our infilling comes. We must daily carry our earthen pitcher to this Heavenly Fountain to be replenished; for we are leaky vessels. . . . He is looking at us not to see if we are perfect in the flesh—for He knows that we are not and can never be—but to see whether or not we have the spirit of earnestness and loyalty which daily and hourly seeks to keep the body under and to cheerfully take up the cross.

Blessed Results of Spirit's Infilling

The Christian is not to be like the worldling who seeks to drown his troubles and afflictions in drink or in pleasures, dissipations and frivolous diversions; but in every trouble he is to fly to the only true Source of solace and comfort and strength. This will drive away all anxiety and give him rest and peace even in the midst of trouble. Like the fabled halcyon, which built its nest and brought forth its birdlings in the midst of the sea, the true child of God can be at rest even amidst the billows and storms of life, and can prosper as a New Creature and accomplish all the good pleasure of God's will.

This unwavering trust in the Lord, this abiding rest of soul, this zeal in God's service, is a matter of growth. "They go from strength to strength," the Psalmist declares of the inhabitants of Zion. "First the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear," said our Lord of this class. (Psalm 84:7; Mark 4:28.) Notwithstanding the difficulties of life, these can continue to make melody in their hearts unto the Lord. They rejoice no matter what may be the outward earthly conditions. They can smile even through their tears, knowing that, according to His promise, **all things are working together for their good.** To attain this development is to be filled with the Spirit; and each consecrated disciple of Christ should reach this plane.

Some Christian writer has well said: "Wherever there has been a faithful following of the Lord in a consecrated heart, several things have, sooner or later, inevitably followed. Meekness and quietness of spirit become in time the characteristics of the daily life. A submissive acceptance of the will of God, as it comes in the hourly events of each day, is manifested; pliability in the hands of God to do or to suffer all the good pleasure of His will; sweetness under provocation; calmness in the midst of turmoil and bustle; a yielding to the wishes of others [where there is no conflicting principle involved], and an insensibility to slights and affronts; absence of worry or anxiety; deliverance from care and fear—all these, and many other similar graces, are invariably found to be the natural outward development of that inward life which is 'hid with Christ in God.'"—Z. '16:182, 183.

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Our Lord declared that the persecution of the Church in the flesh was a persecution of Himself. What the Church suffers is a part of the sufferings of Christ. The sufferings of Christ will not be **filled up until the last member of His Body shall** have finished His course.—Z. '14:38.

Faith the Mainspring of Consecration

"Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; for He is faithful that promised."—Hebrews 10:23.

THE Apostle is here writing to some in the early Church who had given evidence of wavering, who were failing properly to hold on. He is telling them that while they had been faithful at one time they apparently had become lukewarm, at least, respecting the Lord and the Christian way. He intimates that the firmness of faith in the child of God, and the firmness with which he holds the profession of his faith, has much to do with his consistency in Christian life. Our faith was the mainspring that led each of us to make a consecration to the Lord. We believed that God had provided the Redeemer for the forgiveness of sin. We believed that we would be acceptable and our sins forgiven through the Lord Jesus Christ; and that we would be made sons of God, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with the Lord Jesus. These were the inspiring incentives that first led us to God. They served a good purpose in leading us to the decisive step.

St. Paul says that these Hebrew Christians had witnessed a good profession; but some of them, at least, had been growing more or less indifferent. He declares that although by this time they should have been teachers, they needed to themselves be taught again what were "the first principles of the oracles of God." They had lost part of their faith, their assurance in the Lord.

We all know from experience how things that are brought before our minds may afterwards become dim and hazy. When spiritual things become thus hazy, when we cannot grasp spiritual verities as once we could, when we are fearful and our joy in Christ is fading, we are getting away from this mainspring of our consecration. We are losing our faith. So let us earnestly hold fast to this anchor of our souls lest we drift and be dashed upon the rocks. Unless we do hold fast to our faith we shall lose everything; for "without faith it is impossible to please God." Without faith it would be impossible to gird on the armor and go forth to fight the good fight. We would never go out to a battle that we did not believe existed, or to a battle that we did not believe would bring any results, any reward for the hardships and suffering involved.

Our Personal Responsibility

The Apostle's argument is that we should hold fast the faith which **began** our Christian life and which is also to be the **finisher** of our Christian life. The Lord is able to carry us through and He will do it, if we do our part. But the terms on which the Lord has received us are that we purpose to abide faithful. Hence everything depends on our **holding fast** to this faith which we have professed, without wavering, without harboring any doubts and fears; and the basis of our faith in our ultimate triumph is the assurance that "He is faithful that promised." We know that in the Bible there are "exceeding great and precious promises" for us. While the Lord tells us that there is nothing in ourselves that we can depend on, He assures us that His grace is sufficient, that His strength is made perfect in our weakness. We have only to lay hold upon it. If therefore we hold fast to our faith, we may obtain all that God has promised us. He will be faithful; He will not disregard His promises; He will do all that He has said.

If we hesitate and waver we are either losing our faith or losing the spirit of obedience and love. If, therefore, we realize that either of these conditions exists, we should go at once to the Word of God and to prayer, that our faith, love and zeal may be renewed. We should scrutinize our hearts day by day, to make sure that we are still loyal to the Lord, to see whether we are seeking to lay down our lives according to our covenant, to see whether we are developing the fruits and graces of the Holy Spirit. Thus we shall fulfil our vows, and there shall be "an abundant entrance" administered unto us into the "everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."—Z. '15:167, 168.

Abraham's Prayers for Sodom

Genesis 18:16-33.

Golden Text:—"Men ought always to pray and not to faint." —Luke 18:1.

THERE are several very interesting matters connected with this lesson. Abraham had been living in Canaan and Lot in Sodom for a considerable time, when, at the noon hour, three men one day appeared to Abraham—strangers. He was prompt to show them hospitality, and Sarah his wife joined. The Apostle evidently referred to this incident in the words, "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for some thereby have entertained angels unawares." (Heb. 13:2.) Present-day conditions render such hospitality less necessary, especially in cities where public boarding-houses and hotels are expected to care for the strangers. There is danger, however, that the blessing which goes with hospitality is to a large extent missed by a considerable number of people. While the modern methods have some advantages, the general tendency of all of them is toward greater selfishness—neglect of our neighbor, whom the Lord would have us love as ourselves—not neglecting to do good unto all men as we have opportunity, especially to the household of faith.—Gal. 6:10.

To whatever extent these divine injunctions are disregarded we are in danger of losing a blessing, of failing to cultivate generosity, and, on the contrary, cultivating selfishness. God is the great Giver "from whom cometh every good and perfect gift"; and in proportion as his children would return to his image they must cultivate his spirit of benevolence, generosity, kindness, helpfulness. We are not wishing to suggest the receiving of any and every person into the home, which might be a very dangerous practice; but we do urge that the changed conditions of our time be not allowed to make our hearts hard, selfish and unthoughtful. We cannot afford to do so, for "If any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his," and this would mean the loss of those things which God hath in reservation for them that love him. . . .

The Cry of Sodom

Still hospitable, Abraham accompanied his visitors, whom he had now discerned to be celestial beings appearing in human form. As they moved in the direction of Sodom the Lord is represented as holding a colloquy with himself as to the propriety of intimating to Abraham what might be expected as a judgment upon Sodom, of whose wickedness Abraham certainly was aware. We are given to understand that the fact that Abraham thus far had proven faithful, and that to him belonged the ultimate promise of the blessing of all the families of the earth, was one reason why he was informed respecting the fate of Sodom. "For I have known him [become intimate with him, made a covenant with him, revealed myself to him], to the end that he may command his children and his household after him, that they may keep the way of the Lord to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon him that which he has spoken of him." Thus we see by this indirect teaching that there is method in the Lord's revelation. Matters are made known to his people not merely to satisfy curiosity, but especially because they are in relationship to the Lord and because they are to learn certain lessons in connection with their experiences of life that may be helpful to them in the ultimate work to which they have been called.

In this case, we remember that Abraham had the promise that in his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed, and this included the Sodomites as well. Abraham then, believing the Word of the Lord, had a right to expect that in some way or other, either then or in the future, he and his posterity would have to do with righteous judgment upon the Sodomites. Besides, the Lord is pleased to have those who are in harmony with him know the equity, the justice of all his dealings. "Come, let us reason together," shows us this principle. (Isa. 1:18.) But the Lord never reasons with any except those who have faith in him and trust in his promises. These are the truly wise, of whom it is written, "The wise shall understand [matters as they become due], but none of the wicked shall understand" (Dan. 12:10); and again, "The secret of the Lord is with them that reverence him, and he will show them his covenant."—Psa. 25:14.

Explaining his mission the Lord declared that a great cry had come up to heaven from Sodom and that he was about to investigate, which implied that forbearance had ceased to be of avail and that the time for Sodom's punishment was at hand, and so Abraham understood the matter. We are not to suppose that merely rumors of matters reached the Lord, and then special investigating committees were sent, but rather that this affair was stated in simple language, so that Abraham and all who have read the record since might know that the Lord takes full cognizance of the affairs of earth, that he does not ignore our conditions, and that while he is plenteous in mercy, and long-suffering and patient, he nevertheless "will not always chide, neither hold back his anger forever": a time of retribution shall come.

This is the same thought to which the Apostle Peter draws our attention in connection with the end of this Gospel age and the trouble which will then be precipitated upon the world of mankind. He represents God as having great mercy, long suffering and willingness, that all might turn unto him and live. Nevertheless he shows that a change of dispensation will come, that justice will be laid to the line and righteousness to the plummet, and that all who will not obey that great Prophet shall be ultimately destroyed. (Acts 3:23). In this connection the New Testament refers to Sodom and its sister cities as illustrations of the fact that God will not always chide. We read that the calamity which came upon the cities of the plain was set forth as an example, "suffering the vengeance of eternal fire"—[utter destruction, not eternal torment]. (Jude 7.) Thus eventually God will destroy all evil doers with an "everlasting destruction [not preservation in torment or otherwise] from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power."—2 Thess. 1:9.

Love in Abraham's Character

This one little incident in Abraham's life shows us something of the loving benevolence of his heart, and causes us to love and appreciate him more than ever. The intimation that judgment upon Sodom was near would upon a cruel and loveless heart have suggested a very different course from that pursued by Abraham. Such would have said, "Well, that is an awfully wicked community; they certainly deserve all you could give them; they could not be worse. I told my nephew Lot that he was making a mistake in going to live with such a deplorable set, and having his family intermingle with them; it will serve them all just right whatever kind of punishment you mete out to them."

But Abraham was not at all of this disposition: his heart at once went out in sympathy, and benevolently he surmised that although the plain was notoriously wicked there might at least be fifty righteous persons there—not righteous in the absolute sense of being perfect, but in a relative or accommodated sense of doing right to the best of their ability. (Rom. 8:4.) Abraham had the spirit of a mediator: he said to himself, God has been wonderfully gracious to me everyway, and now that he has opened this subject to me I will make bold to tell him of my heart-sympathy for the people, and to express a hope that he will be generous to them. Then he adds, "Wilt thou consume the righteous with the wicked? Peradventure there be fifty righteous in the city, wilt thou consume and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are therein? That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked, that so the righteous should be as the wicked: that be far from thee. Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"

If these words surprise us—to think that Abraham would dare to call in question the righteousness of the Lord—we should remember that he did not have the blessed advantage that we possess, namely, of the guidance of the Word of God and the enlightenment of the holy Spirit, whereby the Lord's people since Pentecost have been begotten again and granted insight into the deep things of God. We may indeed esteem that this was Abraham's way of putting a question to the Lord rather than criticising him—"If you would destroy the righteous with the wicked, show no difference, would it be just? Lord, show me how this would be just? surely you would do right. I would like to see how justice would be compatible with the course I understand you to have in mind."

Parallels in Our Experiences

Similar questions come to us now. Financial disasters come, and probably as often affect the righteous as well as the wicked; storms and tempests do injury to their interests; indeed, sometimes the Lord seems not only not to show favor to the righteous, but, if anything, permits, as in Job's case, more peculiar disasters to fall to their lot. Under the instructions of the great Teacher and his various assistants, the apostles, we have learned that our interests as New Creatures are sometimes best served by difficulties in the flesh, and that God's promise that **all things shall work together for good to them that love him and are called according to his purpose,** is true. The Lord supervises the experiences of his faithful, so that these afflictions shall seem but light, and shall work out for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory as New Creatures, in the life to come.

Abraham's love of righteousness and sympathy for all who desired to do right was manifested in this petition. It suggests to us that God, in choosing him as one through whom some of his blessings should flow to the world of mankind in due time, made a good choice. We may be sure also that all who will be associated with Christ in his Millennial Kingdom, either as members of the Bride class on the Spirit plane, or as members of the great company, or of the ancient worthy class of princes (Psa. 45:16), must all have such a broad benevolence and desire to do good and to favor the righteous in every way, else they would not be fit for the great work to be entrusted to them.

And as we have noted the character which God chose in Abraham, we may feel sure that the calling and drawing of the Father are chiefly if not exclusively to the same class of benevolent hearts. We cannot say that God has not drawn some very selfish persons into close fellowship with himself, and that none of this class will ever attain to a share in the Kingdom itself or in its work; but we may surmise that this would be very nearly the truth. "The liberal soul shall be made fat." The stingy, the selfish, the ungenerous, we incline to think, will not be drawn, not be called to a participation in the Kingdom. Not that any of us have anything whereof to boast in the way of generosity—not that the grace of God is not able to effect a wonderful transformation from selfishness to generosity—but because those who are most selfish have proportionately less of an eye to see and less of an ear to hear of the message of God's mercy and grace and boundless goodness, and therefore will be less in sympathy with the various features of the divine plan as respects the present and the coming age and its work. So that as a measure of love would seem to be indispensable to our drawing, we see most assuredly that a full development of love is absolutely necessary to our attaining the prize of our high calling.

Growing in Grace, in Mercy, in Love

The Lord answered Abraham that if there were fifty righteous, well-intentioned people in Sodom it would not be destroyed, and Abraham perceived that he was not more just nor more generous than the Lord. But as he thought over the matter it occurred to him that there might perhaps be one or two less than fifty, and so he asked if the city might be spared if there were only forty-five. The reply was, Yes: the Lord was still as benevolent or more benevolent than Abraham: he was merely finding out the goodness of the Lord. His own courage increased, the spirit of love and benevolence having begun to operate, and he queried of the Lord whether now forty would secure mercy upon the city. The answer was, Yes. Abraham had not yet touched the bottom in seeking to measure the Lord's goodness. Step by step he increased his request. Would it be spared for thirty? Then would it be spared for twenty? until finally he asked the Lord if he would spare the city for ten. In every case the answer was, Yes. In every case the Lord was proven to be no less just, no less generous, than his servant. He had not yet been blessed as we have been with the anointing of the eyes of his understanding to an appreciation of the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the love of God, which passeth all understanding.

There is a lesson for us in all of this—a lesson that we should be more and more like our Father which is in heaven, whose message is, "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy"; and again, "If ye do not from the heart forgive those who trespass against you, neither will your heavenly Father forgive your trespasses."—Matt. 5:7; Mark 11:26.

The Depths of God's Mercy

Abraham's solicitude was not for the wicked but for the righteous, and so our sympathies should be with all who in every place love righteousness and hate iniquity—to do them good, to serve their interests, to render them assistance, doing good to all men, especially to the household of faith. Abraham's prayers were not for the wicked but for the righteous. "Shall the righteous suffer as the wicked?" was his plea. It is to be remembered, however, that some who now pray for the wicked do so under the misconceptions handed down from the "dark ages," that the wicked are not destroyed, but preserved either in a purgatory of suffering or an eternity of torture. This ungodly, unscriptural, unreasonable thought had not yet been introduced to the world; the plain word death still meant death, and the hope for a future was that of a resurrection of the dead in God's due time, and under more favorable conditions than in the present—when God's Kingdom would be in power, in control.

When Abraham subsequently heard the result of the disaster—that only his nephew Lot was found a righteous man, and that the Lord delivered the one from destruction, and delivered on his account some who were not as worthy of his favor, members of his family, it must have brought a blush to his cheek—to think that he had questioned the justice of God in supposing that he was about to destroy, with the wicked in the city, as many as fifty righteous when here he beheld God's loving mercy even to the extent of delivering the one righteous person and some of his dear ones. Thus it is with us all: we are finding continually that the "heart of the Eternal is most wonderfully kind":—that in our poor, imperfect, fallen condition we have no measures that will reach to those lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the love of God, which passeth all understanding. Truly, as the Word declares, "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my plans loftier than your plans."—Z. '07: 59-62.

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Let us learn to appreciate the Spirit of the Lord as we find it amongst his brethren, and let us each be more and more zealous for its cultivation, that so far from doing injury or wounding any of them it would be our joy to minister to them, to serve them, to bind up their wounds, and to assist them in every manner within our power.—Z. '07: 201.

◇

The prayers of God's people should be simple, earnest, heart-felt. They need not be long. Repetitions are useless. The Heavenly Father knoweth better than we what things we have need of. He waits to be gracious—waits to be asked for blessings. In so doing he cultivates in his people a proper spirit of appreciation of their needs and longing desires for the good things he is willing to give—to the intent that they may be blessings in the highest sense and degree.—Z. '10: 58.

◇

If a brother stumbles into some filth and rejoices in it and glories in its stench, and will not permit us to assist him out of it, our best plan is to "hold our noses" and go our way and avoid him, until he gets cleansed from the filth, or at least until he invites us to assist him so to do. Our avoidance of him for a time may be the very best lesson we could give him of our detestation of his attitude, his condition.—Z. '09: 41.

◇

Those of the Church—those who are hoping to be kings and priests and to reign with Christ and to be judges of the world—their conduct should be as far as possible in accord with God's standard. Everything should be open, honest, subject to the investigation of the Lord or of anybody. In thus living we shall be proving our faithfulness to the Lord. We must demonstrate our loyalty to Him by being willing to suffer rebuffs and adversity. We must strive most earnestly to overcome our human weaknesses and imperfections, and thus manifest our love for righteousness and for God. We see that our Lord Jesus is the embodiment of these glorious principles for which God stands; and we are to be like Him, our Pattern.

We are to be so in love with God's gracious character and God's methods that we shall greatly prefer to be on His side, under the banner of light, rather than to be children of darkness, whatever its present reward. So let us walk as the children of the light—the children of the Day, and thus we shall be laying up treasures above, and shall prepare ourselves for the glorious things which the Lord has in reservation for those that love Him—for those who are seeking to walk in the Master's footsteps.

"He will never fail us, He will not forsake;
His eternal Covenant He will never break;
Resting on His Promise, what have we to fear?
God is all sufficient for the coming year.
Onward, then, and fear not, children of the Day,
For His Word shall never, never pass away."
—Z. '13: 325, 326.

◇

Let us have this in mind, dear friends, that our participation with our Lord in the glories of the Kingdom is dependent upon our faithfulness here in following Him through evil report and through good report; through honor and through dishonor: in the bearing of the cross along the way of self-denial. —Z. '12: 47.

◇

Our bondage is to the Head and under his direction, and by his Spirit we are firmly bounden by all the principles of righteousness and to all those who have his Spirit, his mind, his disposition, as living members of the one Body. To separate ourselves from these bonds of love and sympathy and fellowship and obedience would mean our starvation and death, even as a branch cannot abide itself, nor bear fruit, except it abide in the Vine, in fellowship with the other branches of the same Vine, and as a participant in the juices (the graces, the blessings) which come to all the true branches through the root.—Z. '09: 92.

◇

The Lord at times permits trials, persecutions, etc., which outwardly seem to imply the wrecking of most precious interests, and sometimes cause surprise to his people by the roughness and jarring conditions. Nevertheless, under Divine supervision, the stirring up of the nest and the throwing of responsibility upon his people can be made advantageous to them. strengthening. helping them. Then comes a time of rest and opportunity for spiritual edification. comfort. growth in grace and knowledge. Happy are those who. in the time of the stirring up of the nest. are rightly exercised by the Lord's providences and taught of him and made more and more active in his service—the service of righteousness. truth and love. It brings them preparation for the period of rest and development.

But to others who are not rightly exercised by the siftings. the shakings. the stirrings up of the nest. the experience is different. They are sifted out. alienated. and develop a hard spirit. foreign to the Lord. and out of accord with his Word. The one class goes on from grace to grace and from strength to strength; the other goes back into the outer darkness of the world. Thus. as the Apostle says. our message is a "savor of life unto life to some. but of death unto death to others."—2 Cor. 2:16; Z. '09:55. 56.

◇

When we consider the preparations which an earthly bride makes for her nuptials. we have a good illustration of how important it is for us to have our garments all prepared. our robes spotless. our embroidery-work all completed beforehand. You and I are privileged to have a most important part in the greatest. grandest wedding ever held. Therefore we should be ready. We who were by nature children of wrath even as others. are now privileged to be cleansed from all defilement by the precious blood of Christ. Daily also we are to wash with the water of the Word. We are to be purified from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, and be fitted to become the Bride of our Heavenly King.

This preparation means a continuous work as long as we sojourn in the mortal body. God's great Programme has been so arranged as to demonstrate who will be fit to constitute the Bride of His Son. This decision in our case will depend on our diligence in making ourselves ready. If we attend to this most important work properly. we shall have no time to fritter away. We shall have little time for anything else than this one thing. But the proper making of ourselves ready means the helping of others as we have opportunity. especially the brethren who are walking this same Heavenly way with us. We are to lay down our lives for the brethren. This is an important part of our preparation. We are to build up ourselves and also the brethren in the most holy faith.—Z. '16:165.

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WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY ILLUSTRATES GREAT TRUTH

We all know something of the wireless system of telegraphy. This is one of the blessings of this "day of the Lord's preparation" for the incoming New Age. It may serve as an illustration of how God has been sending out His Truth. . . . We need to have responsive hearts. ready to receive with gladness the message of God's love and mercy.

If your heart is not rightly in tune, you cannot understand; but as you get it in tune with the Lord. the Message enters. and you can hear the wave tones. God speaks to us in tones of a certain character. We recognize those tones and respond, if our heart is in the proper attitude. . . .

Only those who get their hearts in tune with God can hear it all. and the more fully in tune you get your heart the better you can hear. If your instrument is out of tune. if something happens to get you out of touch with the Heavenly electric wave. then you cannot hear the wonderful melody. If you do not keep in close touch with the Lord. you will fail to catch the harmony. You are out of tune with the Infinite One.—Z. '16:57.

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O. how necessary to the saints is the Truth! How wonderful the Lord's words. "Sanctify them through thy truth. thy Word is truth!" Error can never sanctify. and in proportion as it is mixed in our minds with the Truth. to that extent is the latter diluted and lacking in power.—Z. '06:46.

◇

The groanings and desires of our spirits. our minds. will be taken by the Lord as instead of our imperfect utterances in prayer: for God. who knoweth all things. yea. the thoughts of our minds (spirits). accepts these. All such may know that "all things work together for good to them"—because they love God—because they have been called according to His purpose.—Rom. 8:28; Z. '16:26.

◇

The New Creature cannot rely upon the suggestions of the flesh in every matter. Experience teaches it that it would be deceived and ensnared if it gave heed to the counsels of the flesh. Hence the New Creature must rely wholly upon the Lord and His counsel—the Word of God. The New Creature's reasoning upon any subject must be along the lines of Divine instruction. He dare not trust his own judgment. the judgment of his own flesh in the matter; neither dare he trust the judgment of fellowmen. who might be more or less influenced by their fleshly minds. however conscientious. and however proper they might intend their advice to be. The New Creature must hear from the Word of God the outline of his proper course. and must follow. He dare not deviate from it. not knowing what dire results might follow.—Z. '13:166.

◇

The more we study the subject of faith, the more we are convinced that in God's sight faith is not only indispensable but "very precious." We cannot come to God without faith. we cannot abide in his love without faith. we cannot receive day by day his mercies and blessings and leadings except by faith in his promises. We cannot realize ourselves as his children. begotten of the holy Spirit, and heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord. except as we exercise faith in his Word of promise to this effect. We cannot go on day by day following the Lord except as we are willing to walk by faith and not by sight, for this is the test which he puts upon all of his followers. We cannot see how the oppositions to the world. flesh and devil. which seem so baneful to us. are blessings in disguise except as we exercise faith in God's promises that it will be so. We cannot therefore be prepared for the heavenly Kingdom in its glories and blessings and privileges except as we now have and exercise the faith which will enable us to profit by various lessons given us in the school of Christ.—Z. '06:171.

Old Corn Gems

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The Light of the Word

"The light of the Word shines brighter and brighter
As wider and wider God opens my eyes;
My trials and burdens seem lighter and lighter,
And fairer and fairer the Heavenly prize.

"The wealth of this world seems poorer and poorer,
And farther and farther it fades from my sight.
The prize of my calling seems surer and surer
As straighter and straighter I walk in the light.

"My waiting on Jesus is dearer and dearer
As longer and longer I lie on His breast.
Without Him I'm nothing, seems clearer and clearer,
And more and more sweetly in Jesus I rest.

"My joy in my Savior is growing and growing
As stronger and stronger I trust in His Word.
My peace like a river is flowing and flowing,
As harder and harder I lean on the Lord.

"My praise and thanksgiving are swelling and swelling
As broader and broader the promises prove;
The wonderful story I'm telling and telling,
And more and more sweetly I rest in His love."
—Z. '14:315.

Give Me Submission, Lord

Dear Father, hold my trembling hand,
And bid my heart be still,
And help me while I waiting stand,
To know and do thy will.

Teach me, when grief has touched my heart,
Or when my pulses thrill
With some exquisite new-found joy
To trust thee and be still.

For only thou who formed the mind
Canst all its workings know;
And in thy love and pity kind
Compassion thou dost know.

For thou canst school each wand'ring thought
Till it revert to thee;
Thou canst direct each deed that's wrought
Till we thy purpose see.

Thou canst our hearts emotions calm,
Our best affections claim,
Till by thy spirit's soothing balm
They glorify thy name.

Thus what we know, and do, and feel
We give into thy hand;
Use all according to thy will,
For thou dost understand.

Thine is an "everlasting love,"
And therefore thou has "drawn;"
Thou art our magnet from above,
And so we "follow on."

We follow on by day, by night,
Whate'er thy leadings be,
Knowing the path, if dark, or bright,
Leadeth thine own to Thee.—Z. '08:362.

The Church will always be in covenant relationship with the Father. The fact that He calls them **sons** implies that they are **bound** to Him. (John 1:12.) Every father is in covenant relationship with his children, and they with him. Every child has a responsibility to its father, and the father to the child. The fact that God has received the Lord Jesus and the Church as sons (Heb. 3:6) signifies that they are in covenant relationship with Him. St. Paul says, "We are the children of God; and if children, then heirs." (Rom. 8:16, 17.) His statement not only **implies** that relationship, but **proves** it; for the sons have a right to the things which the father has provided for his children.—Z. '13:20, 21.

◆

Let us remember that the keeping under of our body appertains to food and drink, to the clothing we wear, to the way we spend our consecrated time, to our every thought, word and deed.—Z. '15:150.

It is a marvelous privilege to be of this Lord's goat class, the sanctified in Christ Jesus, who are to share with him in His sufferings of the present time and then to reign with him throughout eternal ages of glory. Let us prove to God our appreciation of this glorious calling, by faithfulness even unto death. —Z. '16:101.

◆

Surely all will agree that in the dark pathway of sorrow and the shadow of death, in which we daily walk, there are abundant opportunities to be generous, even for those who have no money to give. A kind word of sympathy or advice, yea, even a kind look, has sometimes been worth more to a discouraged brother than a handful of gold.—Z. '09:362.

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OLD CORN GEMS

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"And they did eat of the OLD CORN of the land on the morrow after the Passover . . . and the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the OLD CORN of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year." Joshua 5:11-12.

A SAFE RULE

"WHERE A BROTHER GIVES AN INTERPRETATION OF A SCRIPTURE WHICH DIFFERS FROM THAT GIVEN BY BROTHER RUSSELL, AND BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION SEEMS REASONABLE AND IN HARMONY WITH THE PLAN OF GOD, THEN WE BELIEVE IT A SAFE RULE TO FOLLOW BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION, FOR THE REASON THAT HE IS THE SERVANT OF THE CHURCH, SO CONSTITUTED BY THE LORD FOR THE LAODICEAN PERIOD; AND THEREFORE WE SHOULD EXPECT THE LORD TO TEACH US THROUGH HIM. WHERE THERE ARISES A DOUBT IN THE MIND AS TO WHICH INTERPRETATION IS CORRECT, THEN IT IS ALWAYS SAFER TO RESOLVE THAT DOUBT IN FAVOR OF BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION. WE BELIEVE SUCH TO BE IN HARMONY WITH THE LORD'S WILL." Z. '18:51.

Justice—Righteousness—The Foundation of Christian Character

"To do justice and judgment is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice." "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams."—Proverbs 21:3; 1 Samuel 15:22.

THESE words were addressed to God's chosen people, the Jews. The nation of Israel had come into special relationship with God. At Mt. Sinai, they had entered into a Covenant with Him and had pledged themselves to do justice and judgment. This was a requirement of Jehovah. But there seemed to be a tendency to think of sacrifices as being especially pleasing to the Lord. Some seemed inclined to feel that no matter how unjust they had been, they could offer a sacrifice and make it all right. But Jehovah pointed out that this would not do. His Law was a **requirement,** and must come before all else; whereas these special sacrifices of thanksgiving for victories, etc., were **privileges,** voluntary offerings. The Law demanded full allegiance to God.

The relationship of Israel to God as His people was based upon the Law. This Law comprised **justice** and **judgment.** The Israelites were to do according to its commands—first Godward, then manward. They were not to steal, not to kill, not to covet, etc. The essence and substance of the Golden Rule was there embodied.

To do justice is to do that which is just, right, equitable; to do judgment would be to render righteous decisions in the mind, to decide justly. One might be very just in his business dealings with his fellows. He might be very careful not to cheat any one out of a cent; and yet in his mind he might have unkind, uncharitable views of others, and perhaps say things about them that would be very unrighteous. This counsel of the Wise Man seemed to guard not only against the **doing** of injustice, but against having wrong **thoughts.** The decisions of our minds, as well as our actions, should be in harmony with the principles of righteousness.

Our Inability to Judge Others

We are not to judge, decide, in an unfavorable manner in the case of any with whom we have to do, without indubitable proof. If they claim to be trying to do right, we should give them credit for sincerity wherever possible. We are not to call them hypocrites, for we cannot judge their hearts. Our Lord called some hypocrites in His day; but He had a superior power of discerning the heart, and we have not that power. We are not to judge the motives of others. We are not to go beyond their declaration, for we are not competent to do so.

We may at times judge the outward action as wrong or improper, but we are not to attempt to judge the heart, where there is possibility of misjudgment. We have pledged ourselves to strive to observe the Golden Rule in our every action and word and thought, and we are to remember that God would be more pleased with us if we did not sacrifice and merely maintained our relationship to the Golden Rule, than that we should manifest ever so much zeal in **sacrifice** and yet violate the rule of **justice.** This rule requires love for our neighbor as for ourself. As the Apostle Paul reminds us in that matchless chapter on **Love**—1 Cor. 13: "Though I give all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not **love,** it profiteth me **nothing.**"

The proper course for us as disciples of Christ is that we observe the Golden Rule in our conduct, watching over our thoughts and our lips; and also that we present continually all that we have and are in sacrifice to the Lord. But obedience, justice, **must come first,** for this is demanded by the Law of God. Before we can make much development in the cultivation of sacrificial love, we must learn to have a love of justice, righteousness. There is a trite and true proverb that a man must be just before he is generous. It behooves the children of God, as members of the New Creation, to study with diligence this subject of strict justice toward all, and to put into practice day by day this quality of character which is absolutely essential if we would be acceptable to God; for it lies at the foundation of all Christian character.

We are not able while still in the fallen flesh, to keep perfectly this Law of strict justice in act, word and thought. But it should be our prayerful endeavor to do so as far as possible. The merit of Christ will then make up for all unintentional and unavoidable deficiencies. Those only who have this foundation of character well laid can make proper progress. A love which is built on a foundation of injustice, or wrong ideas of righteousness, is delusive, and is not the love which the Lord's Word enjoins and which He will require as a test of true discipleship. Obedience to God demands that we strive to be just in deed and word and thought.

Obedience a Test of Loyalty

The lesson taught in the Lord's rebuke to Saul at the mouth of the Prophet Samuel, given in our second text, applies with much force to Spiritual Israel. How often today we see the need for this counsel amongst the professed followers of Christ! Many of these are Christian workers in the various denominations of Christendom, and many are their sacrifices of time, strength and money; but inasmuch as they are not obedient to the Lord they fail of the blessing they might have, and indeed cut themselves off from greater privileges and opportunities. Yea, many of them, we fear, have cut themselves off from the Kingdom—from glory and joint-heirship with the Master in that Kingdom. We should learn from this lesson given us in the experience of Saul that our Heavenly Father wishes us to be very attentive to His Word, and not to think for a moment that we can improve upon it, nor that any circumstance or condition will excuse us from obedience to Him.

Had King Saul obeyed God, and the results had seemed to prove disastrous, he would have had a clear conscience. He would have been **obedient,** and could have left the results with the Lord. God would have been responsible for the results. How many of the Lord's people in Babylon would be blessed by following the instructions in this lesson!

Many have said to themselves again and again: I see that present arrangements and conditions in the churches are contrary to the simplicity of the Gospel of Christ and the practise of the early Church. I see that much is practised and taught that is not sanctioned in the Scriptures. But what can I do? I am identified with this system and am engaged in sacrificing for its upbuilding. If I now withdraw myself, it will mean more or less disaster or loss to it as well as to myself. I wish I were free from human institutions and that I had my hands filled with the Lord's work along the lines of His Word, but I cannot let go; necessity seems laid upon me. This seems to be the most convenient place for me to work and to sacrifice.

The Lord is not pleased with such arguments. His message to us is that to **obey** is better than **sacrifice,** however active and busy we may be. He tells us plainly that no sacrifice we can offer will be acceptable to Him unless we are first obedient to His Word.

The Fruits of Disobedience

We remember that Saul's error was his failure to carry out the command of the Lord in every particular. He slew all the Amalekites, old and young, except the king, whom he kept alive, possibly thinking to exhibit him in some kind of triumphal display. As for the flocks and herds, he consented that his people spare all that were goodly and desirable, but everything that was vile and refuse he destroyed utterly.

As we study the narrative and note the indignation of Samuel, and the Lord's positive declaration of His displeasure and of the punishment to be meted out to Saul, we see clearly that the king had not misunderstood his instructions, but with considerable deliberation had violated them. Consequently we must understand his words of explanation to Samuel to have been to a considerable extent hypocritical. He first saluted the Prophet with blessings and assurances that he had performed the command of the Lord. But Samuel replied: "What means, then, this bleating of sheep and lowing of oxen which I hear?" He understood at once that the destruction had not been complete, that Saul had only partially obeyed the Lord.

Saul, noting the displeasure of the Prophet of the Lord, began hypocritically to assure him that these fine sheep and oxen had been preserved that they might be sacrificed to the Lord. Alas, how fallen human nature ever seeks to justify itself in its course of perversity and disobedience to the commands of God! How much wiser and better would it be to obey under all circumstances! Saul reaped the result of his disobedience in being rejected as king of Israel. How bitter are the fruits of following our own course, of compromising our conscience, of seeking to evade the responsibility which rests upon us as professed children of God! It is sure to bring trouble and spiritual disaster to the Lord's people; and the hiding of our Father's face.

Ordinarily considered, sacrifice is a step beyond mere obedience. Obedience is a **duty** toward God. We ought to obey God. To His creatures God's will is **Law.** This is duty of the very highest type. But the privilege of sacrifice granted to the people of God goes beyond duty, beyond obligation. We may **give** unto the Lord what He has not **required** of us; but what we give in sacrifice is voluntary, not commanded. . . .

Coming down to the ordinary affairs of life, we see that justice should be the very foundation of everything—between husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters, teachers and pupils, employers and employees, etc. The lesson of our text is a very important one to us of the Church. In Christian character justice, obedience to God's Law, comes first; mercy and benevolence come afterwards. We do not know of a principle that the Lord's people need to learn more particularly than this one of justice.

Injustice seems to crop out in many ways in the fallen human nature. Little injustices are daily practised in respect to trifles. These are thought not worth considering. But whoever cultivates injustice in even a small way is building up a character which will be unfit for the Kingdom. As justice is the foundation of God's Throne and of God's character, so justice must be the foundation principle governing the lives of His people.

The Obedience of The Christ

The lesson of obedience is one which should be deeply engraved upon the hearts of all the sanctified in Christ Jesus. It is necessary, too, that we have the **spirit** of obedience and not obey merely the letter. Whoever has the true spirit of obedience will not only obey the expressed commands of the Lord, given in His Word, but will seek to know the Divine will in everything. He will seek to note the providences of his life, that he may be guided in the way the Lord would have him go. It is such faithful, obedient children of God who exclaim in the language of the Prophet: "Thy words were found, and I did eat them, and Thy Word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart!" (Jeremiah 15:16.) These can say with our dear Master: "Lo I come! I delight to do Thy will, O my God!" Let all, then, who would be wholly acceptable to our Father in Heaven be very diligent to build character in harmony with His Law, having justice in thought, in word and in deed at the foundation, justice in our relationship to God, to the brethren and to all, and then building thereupon all the various qualities of love, that thus we may grow up into Christ our living Head in all things, and be able to render up our account at last with joy and not with grief.—Z. '14:100-102.

Can Evil Befall the New Creature?

"There shall no evil befall thee." (Psa. 91:10.) "Pilate took Jesus and scourged him. . . . They crucified him and two others with him; on either side one, and Jesus in the midst." —John 19:1, 18.

SUCH combination of Scripture, apparently contradictory, is quite a stumbling-block to worldly people; and some of those who have inclinations toward the Lord, but have not much knowledge of his Word and Plan, experience all kinds of trouble in a vain attempt to reconcile them. To these God's Word is apparently proven to be untrue. Only from the standpoint of faith can it be recognized as always true and harmonious. Yet the standpoint of faith may not always be exactly the same. We might use the word "thee" in the text, as applying to the Lord (the New Creature) and the members of the Body (the New Creatures) and consider that the flesh is the great enemy, the great opponent, to be gotten rid of. Or we might think of the flesh as their earthly tabernacle for the time, and take the matter in a more figurative way.

We, however, prefer to consider the New Creature entirely apart from the flesh. "No evil shall befall thee." Applying this to our Lord, we see that no evil befell him as a New Creature. All the things that happened to him were necessary. Without these he could not have fulfilled the calling that was given him. Similarly we, as New Creatures, as his followers, could never have attained to this calling except by the crucifixion of the Lord. "Mortify, therefore, your members which are upon the earth." —Col. 3:5.

Our Lord's followers have to some extent lost the esteem of their friends and neighbors; they have been counted as the offscouring of the earth. They have been tested in every possible manner. These things were necessary for them; therefore, they were not evil.

"The Captain of Their Salvation Made Perfect Through Sufferings"

Our Lord asked, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into his glory?" (Luke 24:26.) To be fitted for the priestly office to which he was called, our Lord must be proved beyond all peradventure. His loyalty was put to the extremest test in the Garden of Gethsemane. Possibly he himself did not realize the strength of his righteous character until brought face to face with this last trial. There he was tried and proved to the uttermost, and under the trial his character—always perfect to the full measure of its testing—gained, by Divine grace, its glorious perfection of completeness.

Thus, through suffering, he learned obedience to the perfect will of God, down to the lowest depths of self-abnegation; and God permitted it so to be, because such proving was necessary, both for the development and the manifestation of that perfection of character which would be worthy of the high exaltation to which he was called.

And so we also must suffer if we would be footstep-followers of the Lamb. Character cannot be developed wholly without trial. It is like a plant; at first it is very tender; it needs an abundance of the sunshine of God's love; frequent watering with the showers of his grace; much cultivating through the applied knowledge of his character, as a foundation for faith and an inspiration to obedience. Then, when thus developed under these favorable conditions, it is ready for the pruning hand of discipline, and is also able to endure some hardness. And little by little, as strength of character is developed, the tests applied to it serve only to develop more strength, more beauty, more grace, until it is finally fixed, developed, established, perfected through suffering. Thus we learn to realize that "All things work together for good . . . to the called according to his purpose," to those who are to be members of his Body.—Rom. 8:28.

Delivered Over to the Adversary for the Destruction of the Flesh

But some one may ask, "We see how these experiences of life are working out good for the New Creature; but is there no way in which experiences could work out evil things that would be bad for them?"

We are to recognize that there are two classes of spirit-begotten ones, and that our text has reference to only one class of these. There is the Body of Christ, representing the priestly order, the antitypical Melchisedec—Jesus the Head and the Church his Body. They have kept nothing back of their love and devotion; things may happen disastrous to their fleshly interests; but they remember that they are "not in the flesh, but in the spirit," and realize that no outside influence can mar their real interest as New Creatures, nor hinder them, if faithful, from attaining to the glories of the Kingdom with their Lord and Head. They have entered into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, and do not withdraw; they "abide in the secret place of the Most High"; they will continue unto the very end. It is to this class, and to all the things that may befall them, that the assurance is given—"There shall no evil befall thee."

As for the other of the two classes—the "Great Company"—some evils do befall them. They will be put into great tribulation. It was an evil on their part that they neglected the Lord's Word and the privileges of the "high calling." This coolness brought them into a condition which must be made right. They loved "father or mother or houses or lands," or something else, to such an extent that they failed to keep their covenant of sacrifice, and will be accounted unworthy of a share in the Kingdom, and will, instead, be subjected to the great time of trouble—"the day of wrath." It will be necessary that these evils come upon them to bring destruction of the flesh.—Z. '11:58, 59.

The Christian's Warfare Against Pride

"The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."—2 Corinthians 10:4, 5.

SOLDIERS of the Cross are of a different kind and are differently armed from the soldiers of the world. Ours is a fight against the spirit of the world and against the flesh. It is the fight not only against the imperfections that came into our flesh through our forefather's disobedience, but against the natural opposition of the flesh to sacrifice. The flesh instinctively struggles to avoid sacrifice. Moreover, our fight is against unseen spiritual foes. The world have their swords and their guns as weapons of warfare. And the Lord has provided us an armor; namely, the breastplate of righteousness, the helmet of salvation, the shield of faith, the Sword of the Spirit, and the sandals of "the preparation of the Gospel of Peace." These are all weapons of defense, except the Sword. The Sword is an aggressive weapon.—Ephesians 6:11-18.

In the case of the Christian, "the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God," is to be handled to accomplish good, to be used in opposition to Satan and sin. But the thought of this Scripture seems to be, not that we are commissioned to fight the world, but that we are to strive to be loyal to the Lord, to fight sin in ourselves and wherever it might properly be under our jurisdiction, and to repel the attacks of the Adversary. The exercise of our powers in bringing **self** into subjection means a great deal in the way of sacrifice, much in the way of battling. God has given us "exceeding great and precious promises." The New Creature is made strong by these promises—strong in proportion as he perceives the significance of these promises, and feeds upon them.

Mental Strongholds To Be Cast Down

The Apostle is pointing out that these strongholds which we are to pull down are in ourselves. Sin is entrenched in our minds, in our imaginations. Pride, selfishness and various other kinds of sin, are entrenched in us through the long centuries of the downward tendencies of our race. These things have dug deep trenches in our system; they are firmly fastened there. But, urges St. Paul, "Let not sin have dominion over your mortal body." Destroy the stronghold. Bring your entire being into subjection to the will of God.

By way of pointing out what these strongholds are—that they are **mental** strongholds—the Apostle says, "Casting down **imaginations,** and every high thing that exalteth." Our imaginations may be of many kinds. . . . The Word of the Lord is the only thing that will cast down imaginations—ignorance, superstition, pride, unholy ambitions, idle speculations, and every form of thought that would lead us astray and hinder the work of grace in our hearts and minds. These imaginations of the natural mind exalt themselves against the true knowledge of God, the Spirit of God—"high things," the Apostle calls them.

We are to "mind not high things." The Apostle does not mean that we are not to mind the high things that are spiritual; for in another place he says, "Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth." (Colossians 3:2.) In other words, Set your affections on the **very highest things.** But the "high things" of the world are very different; they exalt themselves against the things which are truly high, which are of God. The Lord's children are to be humble, not high-minded, not to be carried away by the empty honors, projects and ambitions of earth. The desire to have a place among men, to have wealth and influence, to have whatever things would bring us into high esteem amongst mankind, is a temptation that the disciple of Christ must guard against.

It has been noted by those who have the care of the mentally defective that a great deal of difficulty lies in the imagination. It is said that if one visits an insane asylum, he will find one here who thinks he is a king; there another, who imagines that she is a queen; another who imagines he is fabulously rich and could draw checks for millions. The organ of self-esteem has been too large. The Lord only knows how much the individual himself has had to do in cultivating this tendency. But he has always more or less to do with the matter; the high imaginations and the desire to be great obtain dominion over him—get the mastery.

Pride Leads to Mental Unbalance

The same thing applies to Christians. After coming into the Church of Christ, they are still liable to the ambition to become some great one, to do some great thing, to find or promulgate some great doctrine, to discover some new interpretation of Scripture or some new type. All these are "high things that exalt." Our Lord gave a discourse upon this subject, telling us that when we are invited to a feast, we should not take a high seat, but a low seat—and perhaps afterward we might be exalted. To desire these things and to seek for them is to have "strongholds" of pride and unholy ambition in the imagination, aspirations for exaltation and honor. Then comes the thought that we are great, that we are worthy of attention, of special notice. Mental unbalance is there. The fact is that we are all insignificant, of very little importance in the execution of the Lord's Plan.

The Lord could have done all His great work without us and our co-operation, probably more easily than with us. But He very graciously permits us to have a part in His work, for our own good and blessing. He is dealing with us as children and is training us. Having begotten us of His Holy Spirit, He helps us to overcome our weaknesses and rewards us if we do overcome them. He drills and disciplines us to fit us for a noble and glorious future. A part of this drilling as soldiers of the King of kings is our fight against self-esteem and a desire for great things, high things, according to the standards of this "present evil world."

"Bringing Into Captivity Every Thought"

The thought of casting down unholy and unprofitable imaginations is also borne out in the final words of our text, that we are to "bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." Whatever we do we have first thought about. We sometimes say, "I acted before I thought." What we mean is that we acted before we gave the matter serious thought. No thought should be harbored in our minds which is not in full harmony with the Word of God. As Christ was obedient to the Father in everything—saying, "Let not My will, but Thine, be done"—so every one of us should bring our thoughts into obedience to Christ. Our Redeemer is our Exemplar. All the members of Christ's Body must have the same mind that was in Christ, must manifest the spirit of our Master. "Let us humble ourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt us in due time." (1 Peter 5:6.) No one can wholly follow the Lord without much of the spirit of humility, without bringing his thoughts into subjection to the Lord. This is not the time to exalt ourselves and to show how we can shine. But we are to "show forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvelous light" (1 Peter 2:9), who has called us with this Heavenly Calling, not for our own sakes merely, but for His own glory and the blessing of others. God's glory is to be our chief concern always. We are to be efficient servants of the Lord, through His grace, not of our own strength. If we are to be great in the end, we must be humble, we must gladly be servants of all now. We must be glad to serve, not only when there is honor attached, but when the service is unnoticed or unknown.

God has arranged for our learning certain lessons of self-control, bringing ourselves into full obedience to God in a voluntary way, with a view to our being His representatives by and by, and of then enforcing obedience to God's requirements on the part of the world. It is a generally accepted principle that no one is qualified to rule others who has not himself learned obedience. At the cost of great suffering, our Lord Jesus learned what obedience means. He promptly and fully submitted Himself to God. This Spirit of Christ is to be manifested and developed in us, that we shall thus be ready for the future work of The Christ, the work of the Millennial Age.

In proportion as the Truth is received and assimilated, it brings to us the spirit of a sound mind. It does not bring us perfect soundness of brain; but where rightly received, it brings meekness, teachableness, thoughtfulness, seriousness. It leads us to take careful heed to the instructions of our Heavenly Guide. It thus gives balance to the judgment, greater than we had ever before known. This should increase as we go on in the good way and become disciplined soldiers in the army of the Lord. But if the Truth is not received in the spirit of the Truth, in the love of it, it might not only fail to be of any benefit, but might engender a spirit of pride and boastfulness.

This quality of pride seems to be particularly associated with all kinds of insanity. Many of the inmates of insane asylums are affected with a large degree of self-esteem—thinking of themselves more highly than they ought to think. Their minds are unbalanced in that direction to a notable degree. We cannot be too careful to cultivate nearness to the Lord, which always brings humility and a proper realization of our own unworthiness and littleness before Him.

Keeping Close to Christ Our Only Safety

Satan is especially alert to trap the Lord's children in this "evil day." We might give an illustration which we have used before, but which seems well to picture wherein lies our special danger and our entire safety. Suppose we should consider a large circle, with Christ as the Center of that circle. Suppose the circle contained an abundance of space, so that there might be varying degrees of closeness to the Lord. Let the outer edge of that circle represent the utmost limit of God's care over His children. Any one, then, nearing the outside line would be coming more and more into a place of danger. We believe that in proportion as any of us live close to the great Center of the circle—our Lord Jesus—we are safe. In proportion as we fail to do this, and allow ourselves to drift or to wander away from Him, we shall be getting near the danger point, and are amenable to the evil influences from outside. Should we wander entirely over the outer line, our case would be beyond recovery.

The Lord has in a way put around the human race a barrier against danger. This barrier is, largely, man's will. Those who have given up their wills, their minds, to the Lord, to have His will done in them, are particularly liable to severe and subtle attacks of the Adversary. He especially seeks to delude and entrap the true children of the Lord, thus again to bring them into bondage to sin. Upon such as come under his influence, the delusion is gradual.

We are all born with unsound minds. As to the degree of unsoundness we need not quarrel. The armament which the Lord gives us is not merely a knowledge of how to quote Scripture. Neither is it merely to have the ability to dispute and to debate, though that ability is very good in its place. The real thing that God is looking for is in our hearts. He is not looking to see how much you know; for He could pump a good deal of knowledge into you in a few minutes if He so desired. But the Lord is looking to see to what extent you are meek, patient, fully submitted to His will. Let us have more and more of the Spirit of the Lord, the spirit of a sound mind, and the earnest desire to help one another.

"The Lord shall judge His people." (Hebrews 10:30.) If they get into trouble through not being sufficiently watchful, the Lord will give them some experiences which will be good for them, if rightly received. Let us remember the warning words of the Apostle Paul: "If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged" of the Lord. (1 Corinthians 11:31.) This means that when we neglect to judge ourselves, He has to do it for us. Then we are being chastened with a view to our correction, that we might attain unto the Heavenly reward and favor that is to be ours as New Creatures in Christ, if we remain humble and faithful unto death. If we continue to be meek and filled with the spirit of humility, not craving present honors and exaltation, but willing in perfect patience to await the Lord's own good time, our exaltation will come; and we shall share our Savior's Throne and His glory forevermore.

"O blows that smite, O wounds that pierce
This shrinking heart of mine!
What are ye but the Master's tools,
Performing work Divine!
How blest that all these seeming ills
That draw my heart to thee
Are each a proof that Thou hast set
Thy seal of love on me!"—Z. '16:131-133.

Loyalty the Great Test

AT THE CLOSE of the Millennium, when men shall have been made perfect, the world of mankind will be subjected to a final test, not as to their perfection of human nature, but as to their loyalty to God. The test upon Mother Eve was of this character. She was not deceived in the sense of not knowing the meaning of loyalty to God or what constituted disobedience. God had forewarned her. She knew what was right. But she was deceived so far as the consequences were concerned. So with Satan. He was deceived as to the outcome of his course, in thinking he would be able to carry out his plans despite the Lord.

So, we believe, it will be at the end of the Millennial Age. Some of mankind will be deceived as to the result of the course they will take. All who are entirely loyal to the Divine Law will perceive the error of the wicked. During the Millennial Age Christ, as the Mediator, will stand between mankind and the full requirements of Justice; and mankind will be, as it were, in a household of protection. When all evil influences are restrained mankind will have a very favorable opportunity for coming to a full knowledge of the Divine requirements. After they shall have enjoyed the blessings of Restitution to the full, then it will be appropriate that a test shall come to see whether their adherence to righteousness is merelly a matter of policy or whether they have reached such a condition of heart-loyalty to God and righteousness as not to be moved from righteousness by any influence.

At the end of the Millennial Age, then, after they shall have been turned over to the Father, He will thus test mankind to see whether or not they have learned full obedience. Evil influences will be let loose for a season. If they have not learned thoroughly the lesson of obedience they will be unworthy of everlasting life and will demonstrate that theirs has been merely a policy-service. It will be because they have not come into fulness of heart-harmony with God that they will be peculiarly susceptible, in this trial respecting their loyalty.

All Must Be Tested as to Loyalty to God

Satan was tested as to his loyalty to God. Adam and Eve were tested as to their loyalty to God. In the time of Noah the angels were similarly tested—not as to whether they preferred right to wrong, but as to their entire loyalty. Jesus Himself was tested as to His loyalty to the Father. So mankind, at the end of the Millennial Age, will be tested as respects their heart-harmony with God.

As to the nature of their test we are not specifically informed. Possibly the temptation that will come to mankind at that time will be the desire to take possession of the government of earth before it is fully turned over to them. If this be true, since they will know that it is God's intention to turn the earth over to mankind when the end of the thousand years shall come, they will be anticipating the immediate transfer of everything from the Ancient Worthies, who shall have been ruling as "princes in all the earth." (Psa. 45:16.) When the time shall be fully come, they will be disappointed. "And they went up on the breadth of the earth and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city." —Rev. 20: 9.

This shows the condition of many of the world at that time. Many of them will become restless. They will say, "These Ancient Worthies are holding back the Government from us. We do not need to have anything to stand between us and the government of the world." This attitude will be disloyalty to God. Knowing that all things are of Divine arrangement, they should say, "The thousand years, seemingly, are over. We thought this Government would be turned over to us. But we will leave matters entirely in God's hands. If He sees best to give us the Government, well and good. But if He sees best to hold it back after the time is up, we shall be satisfied." Such would be the attitude of loyalty.

So today. Our attitude should be to recognize that there is but one God and one Lord Jesus Christ; and that we will obey them. In due time we shall see God's Wisdom, Justice, Love and Power fully demonstrated; that they are fully harmonious in all of the affairs that God has permitted. Those who can see this by faith, are now demonstrating their loyalty of heart to God.—Z. '11: 360, 361.

Filthiness of Flesh and Spirit

"Having therefore this promise, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord."—2 Cor. 7:1.

WE ARE not to understand the Apostle here to mean that we are to cleanse ourselves from the condemnation of original sin. Time and again the Apostle Paul and all the writers of the New Testament reiterate in various forms the declaration that by the deeds of the law no flesh can be justified in God's sight. This signifies that nothing that we can do can enable us to live perfectly, even if original sin were cancelled for us; hence it would be a still greater impossibility for us not only to live perfectly now but to accumulate a merit which would cancel for us our share in the original transgression. On the contrary, the Scriptures with united voice declare that only by the shedding of blood could there come a remission of original sin—that only "by his stripes are we healed:" that the "Lord laid on him [Jesus] the iniquity of us all." "He died the just for the unjust that he might bring us to God," and that by virtue of his sacrifice for our sins we are made acceptable with God, and the condemnation against us as members of Adam's race is set aside that we may have a new start. (Heb. 9: 22; Isa. 53: 5, 6; 1 Pet. 3:18.) Not only so, but knowing that in our fallen flesh dwelleth no perfection, the Lord has graciously arranged to cover all our blemishes that are of heredity and not of intention, not of our willing. Thus we have what is Scripturally known as justification by or through faith in the great atonement which God has effected through the death of his Son. . . .

The Lord requires a demonstration on our part—of activity against the motions of sin in our flesh, in our minds, as a demonstration that the New Creature is alive to the responsibilities of its conduct as a soldier of the cross, and additionally because he has decreed that none shall be of the little flock of joint-heirs with his Son who do not in these respects of loyalty to the Father and to righteousness and opposition to sin demonstrate their heart-likeness to Jesus. The Apostle affirms this, saying that we are "predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son." (Rom. 8: 29.) Whoever refuses or neglects the development of such a character-likeness or copy of Christ's mind, disposition, is refusing or neglecting the only terms and conditions on which he may hope for a place in the Kingdom class. In view of this how zealously we should strive to fulfil the urgent admonition of the Apostle—to demonstrate and to increase to fervency our love for righteousness, for truth, for all the ways of the Lord, by opposition to sin, especially in our own bodies, cleansing ourselves of all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit (mind).

Filthiness of the Mind

The cleansing of our minds is far more important than the cleansing of our flesh, because we might succeed measurably in cleansing the flesh while the mind might still be impure. In such a case we would remember the Pharisees whom the Lord rebuked, saying, Ye make clean the outside of the cup or platter, but within are full of all manner of uncleanness, impurity. (Matt. 23: 25.) Out of the mind proceedeth evil thoughts, as the Apostle declares, and these evil thoughts, these wrong conceptions, have to do with all the filthiness of the flesh. It is mainly, therefore, to the mind that the Lord appeals throughout his Word during this Gospel age. He invites us first of all to set our hearts right, our wills, and then having done this to allow the new will to rule our minds, and thus the new will through the cleansed mind institutes a rule and order and purification of the flesh.

Were we perfect there would be little difficulty in ruling our minds and our bodies as soon as the will had been fixed for righteousness; but six thousand years of falling from the image and likeness of God have wrought great havoc in us all. Hence, as the Apostle declares, "In my flesh dwelleth no perfection"; and again, "We cannot do the things that we would"; and again, "The spirit [here the New Creature, the will] indeed is willing, but the flesh [the old nature, mental and physical] is weak."

(Rom. 7:18; Gal. 5:17; Matt. 26:41.) This discrepancy between the new will, the new mind, and the mind of the flesh and the flesh itself, both reckoned as dead but really quite alive, requiring continual vigilance to restrain them and keep them in line with the New Creature's intentions, means quite a fight, and success in this fight means a victory, and victory in this fight is what the Lord proposes to reward with the special honors and blessings proffered during this Gospel age. It is quite unnecessary here to detail the various forms which this filthiness of the mind may assume—all of them selfish, all of them more or less degraded, all of them tending downward, and hence in opposition to the resolutions and covenants of the New Mind, the New Creature. A part of this filthiness of the mind is selfishness, which frequently is so mean as to be ashamed of itself, to seek to hide itself under various pretexts of generosity, etc., and by outward ostentation, gifts, etc. Other features of the filthiness of the mind are jealousy, covetousness, ambition. These various forms of selfishness are all to be recognized, as the Apostle declares, as of evil origin, works of the flesh and of the Devil. Lasciviousness or sensuality is a further part of this filthiness— another form of selfishness or love of self-indulgence. With all of these conditions of the mind, the New Creature should be in opposition to the extent of despising them, fighting against them, destroying them.

"Filthiness of the Flesh"

Although, as our Lord's words intimate, an outward cleansing of the flesh and making clean of the outside of the cup would not prove a purity within of the mind, of the heart, the proposition is reversely true that outward filthiness does indicate a filthiness of the mind, because the mind controls, and if it were purified the result would be a cleaning up of the outside. Indeed we may be pretty sure that the love for the approval of others would lead almost everyone to keep his externals, seen by men, fully up to the standard of his mind, if not above it. It is easier to cleanse the flesh than to cleanse the spirit, the mind. The Apostle's urgent exhortation is that all who are the Lord's people should cleanse themselves of all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit.

A brother once said to us, "How does it come that the reading of **Millennial Dawn** affected my outward life as nothing else ever did? I used to drink in moderation, I used to smoke immoderately, occasionally I played a game of cards with the rector of the Episcopal Church to which I was attached, I chewed tobacco, and occasionally used strong language, of which I am now ashamed. My friends gave me tracts and booklets on smoking and on the use of intoxicating liquors, but they had no weight with me. I replied, in substance, 'Mind your own business, I am able to take care of myself.' But after reading **Millennial Dawn** a change took place. I gave up all those things of which before I had not been ashamed. They all appeared in a new light—as unworthy of me as a son of God and follower of the Lamb. Now the strange thing to me is this: I looked all through the **Dawns** to see what I had read there that had influenced me thus, and to my surprise I could find no condemnation of the things I had renounced. Now my question is, How does it come that the book which says nothing on this subject has had such a powerful influence over me, while the other books which said much on the subject had no influence?"

We replied, "Brother, the **Dawn** is merely a restatement of the Bible itself and puts matters in the Bible way. Hence it did not ask you as a New Creature to lop off some of the unsightly branches of your fallen disposition, but it did hand you the axe of Truth and suggest to you that you cut down the whole tree, branches and all, pointing out to you that the New Creature would live and flourish and finally be perfected only as it would master the old nature and thus become "more than conqueror," and be counted worthy of a share in the Kingdom, because of its character-likeness to our Lord.—Luke 3:9.

The Cleansing Power

Does some one say that it requires great strength of character, great power of the will, to cleanse our minds and our flesh? We answer, Yes, and that is exactly what the Lord seeks to develop in us. All of his joint-heirs in the Kingdom will be found to be strong characters, and that because of the development of character in the present time in the conflicts with the flesh. Does some one else suggest that with the cravings of the flesh such a victory is impossible? We reply that the Apostle's words do not indicate that the flesh will be made absolutely pure and perfect. His suggestion is that it may be cleansed of its filthiness—so that everything coarse, rude, slovenly, dirty, filthy in thought or in deed, in mind or in person, would be reprehensible to us, offensive. Moreover, we gain this desirable and glorious condition not suddenly but gradually. The cleansing process must begin at once, but **it will continue until our latest breath,** for although we can and do quickly become pure in heart, pure in intention, pure in our wills, it certainly does require time to accomplish the purification of the mind and the flesh. The power which begins this cleansing, which continues it acceptably in the Lord's sight, is the new will; and this very fight against sin and uncleanness strengthens the will so that each victory makes it more ready and more capable for the next conflict. By use our wills grow stronger. Hence the necessity not only of a thorough consecration at the beginning, but the necessity also for keeping this in memory, that the will may always be firm, prompt, unflinching as respects loyalty to God, righteousness, truth, holiness, love.

"God Worketh in You"

The Apostle elsewhere declares along this line, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you to will and to do of his good pleasure." (Phil. 2:12, 13.) We have just been considering how we should work out our salvation, that the new will must hold its dominating influence over the fleshly mind and body (reckoned dead) in order to gain our ultimate victory. But now we inquire, How does God work in us to will and do his good pleasure? We answer that he strengthens our new minds, our consecrated wills, by revealing to us more and more clearly the significance of the exceeding great and precious promises of his Word. Thus is the power of God exercised toward all those who are his through his Word, through his providences, through the brethren in whom he has already worked, and a part of whose business it is as his representatives to build one another up in the most holy faith, and to assist one another in the cleansing of the flesh and the spirit. . . .

Now notice the Apostle's argument—"Having, therefore, this hope, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves." Ah, yes! there is a promise in these words, "the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth"—the power of God that, in proportion as it is received into good and honest hearts, will work in them not only to will aright but also to do aright, thus leading to the cleansing both of the mind and of the flesh. Whoever can comprehend what it is to be a member of God's holy Temple class, must realize the holiness, sacredness, purity that would properly attach to any and everything connected with it. As the Apostle again says, referring to these gracious hopes and promises, whoever has such a hope in him will purify himself even as he is pure. (1 John 3:3.) The thought of being accepted as the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty must be impressive to every heart in proportion as it is appreciated. Few are so gross as to suppose that God would have any fellowship with that which is unclean and impure. And when we see that the divine arrangement through Jesus' sacrifice covers all of our unintentional blemishes and weaknesses, surely we cannot ask for more—that it should cover from the divine sight intentional weaknesses, intentional blemishes or even slackness on our part in putting away all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit.

Perfecting Our Holiness

While we are reckoned of the Lord as perfect, as holy from the moment we are accepted as members of his family, covered by the precious robe of Christ's righteousness, he expects of us, as we have seen before, a manifestation of energy in the vanquishing of the motions of sin in the flesh, and in the perfecting of holiness in our lives. God has but one standard, and that standard is perfection of holiness. His direction to us is, "Be ye perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect." (Matt. 5:48.) At the same time our Lord knew well that in the present life, under present conditions, and acting through our present mortal bodies, it would be an absolute impossibility for any one of his followers to ever attain perfection in the sense or degree that the Father is perfect. Nevertheless it was proper that our Lord should give the perfect standard or pattern just as the school-book sets before the child a copper-plate engraving showing the perfect, the desirable standard of writing, not with the expectation that the child will ever succeed in exactly copying the engraving, but with the desire that the child shall improve itself by attempts at copying. So the Lord wishes us to be continually attempting to copy his perfection and to recognize no inferior standard. Hence our text's declaration respecting our perfecting holiness can mean no more than that we shall do our best to reach the standard of perfection in holiness to the Lord—come as near to that standard as is possible, a little nearer every day we live.

Our text declares that this perfecting of holiness is to be attained through a reverence for the Lord—an appreciation of his greatness, his perfection. The Christian who according to the flesh is deficient in veneration will have greater difficulty along this line of perfecting holiness than one who has naturally large veneration. A great deal of reverence for God and holy things is surely a great aid in our appreciation of the Lord's wonderful greatness and wisdom, power, justice, love; and the greater our appreciation of him, the higher our esteem of the pattern set before us, the better undoubtedly will be our success in the copying of it. A person who has naturally little of reverence for God and holy things, and who is naturally coarser and more self-centered and self-satisfied, has correspondingly a harder work before him. He will the more need to remember his deficiency, and to cultivate reverence for the Lord and to humble himself—"He that humbleth himself shall be exalted; he that exalteth himself shall be abased."—Matt. 23:12.

In view of these things we urge upon all of the Lord's consecrated people a fresh determination to follow the counsel of the Apostle, and to allow the divine promises and prospects to work in our hearts to the cleansing of our minds and our flesh from all filthiness, to the perfecting of our new natures in holiness, in the reverence of the Lord.—Z. '07:134-137.

The Witness of the Spirit

ON FEW subjects have Christians in general felt more disturbed than on this. Not knowing what the witness of the spirit is, they know not surely whether they have it or not. And some, more full of assurance than of knowledge, claim that they have it, and refer to their own changeable feelings as evidence. The Calvinist, repudiating the idea of positive knowledge of sonship, sings,

" 'Tis a point I long to know—
Oft it causes anxious thought:
Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I his, or am I not?"

This comes from a misapprehension of the doctrine of Election. Other Christians, equally misunderstanding the subject, claim that when they feel good these feelings are the witness of sonship. Because the Scriptures say, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee," they judge of their sonship solely by their peace, and often by their prosperity. They lose sight of the words of Jesus—"In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me ye shall have peace."

When things move smoothly they feel good, and consider this the witness of the Spirit. But when they look at the heathen and at the worldly, and see that many of them apparently have peace of mind too, their supposed witness proves insufficient. Then the dark hour comes, and they say, How easy a matter to be deceived, and they sing—

"Where is the peace I once enjoyed,
When first I found the Lord?"

They are in torment lest they have grieved the Spirit—for "fear hath torment." This is all because of the unscriptural view taken of the Spirit and its dealings and witnessings. Let us take the Bible view of the witness of the Spirit (mind) of God with our spirit (mind), and the song of God's children shall be—

"How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in his excellent Word."

As we would know of a man's mind or spirit by his words and dealings, so we are to know of God's mind or spirit by his words and dealings. God's Word is, that whosoever cometh unto him by Jesus (consecrates himself) is accepted. (Heb. 7:25.) Then, the first question to ask yourself is, Did I ever, during the acceptable time, fully consecrate myself—my life, time, talents, influence, my all—to God? If you can candidly answer before God—Yes, I gave myself wholly to him, then be assured, on the authority, not of your feelings, but of God's Word, which, unlike your feelings, is unchangeable, that you then and there instantly became a child of God—a probationary member of the true Church, a branch of the true vine. (John 15:1.) This is a **witness** that you have joined the true Church, which is Christ's body: it is a witness given to your mind or spirit, by the testimony of God's spirit through his Word.

Whether or not you are abiding in him now, depends on whether you have grown as a branch, and are bearing fruit: "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away, and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth [pruneth] it, that it may bring forth more fruit." Here is stated the rule in our Father's family—chastisements, pruning, taking away of dross, and a development of fruit-bearing qualities. If you lack these indications of parental care and personal growth in grace you lack one evidence or **witness** that you are a child. "Whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye be without chastisement, then are ye bastards and not sons." (Heb. 12:8.) Afflictions and troubles come upon the world as well as upon the Lord's saints, but they are not marks of sonship except to those fully consecrated to his service. Nor is the pruning and chastising in the divine family always the same. As with earthly children, so with God's children: to some, a look of disapproval, to others, a word of rebuke, is an all-sufficient reproof, while others must be scourged repeatedly. An earthly parent rejoices most in the child so obedient and submissive that a look or word is sufficient to prune off evil; and so does our Father in heaven. Such are those who judge themselves, and who therefore need less of the chastising of the Lord. (1 Cor. 11:31.) To be of this class requires a full consecration; and these are the overcomers deemed worthy of being joint-heirs with Jesus Christ their Lord, whose footsteps they thus follow. To this obedient, watchful class the Lord says, "I will guide thee with mine eye." Those who can be guided only by the scourge are not the overcoming class, destined to be the Lord's bride.

The chastening, however, is not always suffering for our faults, but with the saints it is often the suffering which strict adherence to their covenant of sacrifice involves. Even so our Lord was chastened for **our** transgressions, not his own, because he bore the sins of many. And so we must suffer as joint-sacrifices with him.

Here is one testimony of the Spirit, then—that every true child or branch needs and will have continual **pruning**. Are you being pruned? If so, that is an evidence of your being a branch; in this pruning the Spirit of truth bears witness with your spirit that you are God's child.

Again the Spirit witnesseth that "whosoever is born [begotten] of God sinneth not." (1 John 5:18.) Such may be overtaken in a fault, may err in judgment, may be overpowered by the old nature not yet under control, but will never wilfully transgress God's will. Now can your mind answer that you delight to do God's will and would not willingly violate or in any way oppose it, but would rather have his will done, his plan carried out, even though it should dash your former hopes and break every tender tie? If so, the witness of your spirit or mind agrees with the spirit of truth, indicating that you are a **child** of God, acceptable to him.

The witness of the Spirit is, that the true branches of the vine, like the vine Christ Jesus, are not of the world—"If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, therefore the world hateth you." "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." (2 Tim. 3:12.) Does your mind testify that it is thus in your experience? If so, then the Spirit of God again witnesseth with your spirit that you are his child. Remember that the world spoken of by Jesus included all worldly-minded ones, all in whom the **spirit of the world** has a footing. In Jesus' day, this was true of the nominal Jewish Church. In fact, all of his persecution came from professors of religion. Marvel not if you should have a similar experience. It was the chief religionists of his day that called Jesus Beelzebub, a prince of devils; and he tells us, "If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household." (Matt. 10:25.) If Jesus had joined hands with them he would not have had "hatred" and "persecution." Even had he kept quiet and let their hypocrisies, shams, long prayers and false teachings alone, he would have been let alone and would not have suffered. So it is with us: it is from a similar class that the truth and those who have the spirit of the truth, and who let their light shine, now incur hatred and persecution. If we have this witness it is another testimony of the Spirit that we are overcoming the spirit of the world—therefore the worldly-spirited hate us.

The Spirit witnesseth that whosoever is ashamed of **Jesus** and **his words**, of him shall he be ashamed. (Mark 8:38.) Does your spirit witness that you are one whom he here promises to confess? If so, rejoice: this is another good witness of the Spirit that your present standing is that of a child and heir.

The Spirit witnesseth that "Whosoever is born [begotten] of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." (1 John 5:4.) Is this your experience? To be an overcomer signifies that you are not in harmony with the spirit—the aims, hopes and ambitions—of the world. Have you this witness that you are overcoming the world? Wait a moment—you are not to overcome the world by flattery, nor by joining in its follies, nor are you to overcome the world by teaching a Sunday class, or joining a sectarian church; no, but by your faith. To be an overcomer you must walk by faith, not by sight. Looking not at things that are seen—popularity, worldly show, numbers, denominational greatness, etc., but looking at the things which are not seen—the spiritual and eternal things.—2 Cor. 4:18.

Again, the Spirit witnesseth that if you are a child of God, you will not be ignorant of his Word, and will not only be in the light as to present truth, but will know something about "things to come." The maturing child will grow in grace, knowledge and love, adding daily the graces of the Spirit—faith, virtue, knowledge, charity, etc. And surely "If these things be in you and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind and cannot see afar off. . . . For if ye do these things ye shall never fall; for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly, into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." (2 Pet. 1:5-11. Compare John 16:12-15.) Ask yourself whether you have this witness of growth, and the sort of fruit mentioned. Remember, too, that you cannot grow in love faster than you grow in knowledge; and you cannot grow in favor except by complying with God's instructions. This instruction, this knowledge, is found in his Word. Hence we are exhorted to "search the Scriptures," that we may be thoroughly furnished unto every good work.—2 Tim. 3:17.

These are the witnesses of the Spirit by which we may know just how we stand. . . . If you are a developed and advanced Christian, every testimony of the Spirit above cited should witness with your spirit. If in any of these testimonies of the Spirit you find yourself lacking, give diligence, give earnest heed, that you may possess every experience described. Then you will no longer sing—

" 'Tis a point I long to know," etc.,

but will know, and be rooted and grounded, built up and established in the faith. In this divinely arranged way, we escape from fear and from what Bunyan called "Doubting Castle," for our trust rests securely on God's promises.

"When darkness seems to vail his face,
You'll rest in his unchanging grace;
His oath, his covenant and his blood
Supporting 'neath the whelming flood."
—Z. '92:176-178.

"Quench Not the Spirit"

1 Thess. 5:19.

IN THE SCRIPTURES light is used as a symbol of the illuminating power of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of God is symbolized, not only by the oil with which the priests were anointed and which represented the indwelling power of the Spirit, but also by the light of the golden candlestick which stood in the Holy. After we had been favored with the knowledge of the Truth and had consecrated ourselves, the Lord accepted our consecration and gave us the Holy Spirit, which became the illuminating power of our hearts. All down the Gospel Age the Church has been the light of the world. This our Lord intimated would be true when He said to His disciples on one occasion, "Ye are the light of the world."—Matt. 5:14.

As there are various ways by which a light may be extinguished, so there are different means by which this light of the Holy Spirit may be quenched in us. A light will go out if the supply of oil or gas which feeds it be cut off, or if the oxygen of the air be shut off from it, whether because the supply is exhausted or because something is placed over the light to extinguish it. So it is with us. The light of the Spirit may be permitted to die out for want of replenishing, or it may be quenched by contact with some outside force.

In order to have the Holy Spirit in large measure, we must keep near to the Lord; for if we get away from Him, the light will go out. If we neglect the privilege of prayer or of study of the Scriptures or of fellowship with the Lord through failure to think of Him, the illumination of the Spirit will grow dim. On the other hand, it will become brighter in proportion to our realization of our own imperfections and to the degree of our consecration to the Lord. This we manifest by the zeal with which we study His will as expressed in His Word, and with which we practice that will in the affairs of life. These are the means by which we may supply the oil to keep our light burning brightly. But while we are endeavoring to do this, we must see to it that we do not come into contact with anything which will tend to extinguish the flame of sacred love in our hearts.

The world, the flesh and the Devil are all in opposition to the light of the Holy Spirit. To whatever extent they are brought into contact with the light, to that extent they smother it. If the spirit of worldliness come into our hearts, it will extinguish the light of the Holy Spirit. If the spirit of selfishness or of thoughtlessness enter our hearts, it will cause the light to grow dim and finally to die out. Weariness in well-doing will produce the same result. If we indulge in pleasures of the flesh, these will tend to quench the Spirit. Sinful pleasures should, of course, be shunned by everybody. But there are pleasures which are not sinful and which are proper enough for the natural man. Yet to whatever extent the consecrated indulge in these and thus gratify the longings of the flesh, proportionately the new nature will suffer.

Christian fellowship is thought to be one of the very best aids to maintaining the light of the Spirit. Yet even in this there is a danger-line which is not always recognized and which, if crossed, will produce the opposite effect. A visit to the seashore and a bath in the ocean may in some cases be very profitable; but in others it may be carried to such an extent that it becomes dangerous to the new nature. Those who become weary in well-doing are usually those who have found something attractive in another direction to take their attention away from the things of the Spirit.

Accurate Knowledge of the Plan Most Essential

Amongst the various arrangements which God has made for the New Creatures in Christ is the assembling of themselves together in order to maintain their light and to let it shine. The Apostle Paul exhorts the Church not to forget the assembling together wherever it is possible to do so. (Heb. 10:25.) Where the assembling is not possible, the Lord makes up for the lack in some other way: and so we sometimes find a dear brother or sister who has not had the opportunity to meet with others in the Truth, but who seems to be very clear and to have a deep appreciation of the Lord's Plan. Not having the privilege of fellowship with others, such a one has done so much the more reading and studying.

Those who have this opportunity for fellowship and who do not appreciate it, seem to be in a very unsatisfactory condition. In such cases, the oil is not burning brightly, else that one would delight to be with fellow-pilgrims in the same way, marching toward the same goal. We should be as careful of our spiritual condition as of our physical. If we have a bad taste in our mouth and no appetite, we conclude that we are not well; and if we do not care to go to meetings, we may know that we are not in good spiritual health. When we find that we have not the desire to meet with others of "like precious faith," it is an indication that we should go to the Great Physician, that He may help us.—Z. '12: 343, 344.

The Praise Belongs to Him

I know if I am chosen to joint-heirship with my Lord,
To reign with Him in glory, to receive that great reward;
If after all my weaknesses a crown for me He'll claim,
I know that choice will surely bring great glory to God's name.

If I had been more worthy, and my stumblings had been few,
When men gave God the glory, they'd have praised my virtue, too;
If I'd ne'er lost a battle, or had never missed the mark,
As they talked about His goodness, mine, also, they'd remark.

But my being so deficient, in thought and word and deed,
Means He'll get all the glory—He deserves it all, indeed.
When they see this weak mortal raised to such immortal heights,
What praise will rise to Him who in such nothingness delights!

I know that when my Savior did return to Heaven above,
And was crowned with wondrous glory, it did prove His Father's love;
But thinking of Christ's merit, and His sinless life of grace,
'Twas no wonder that Jehovah chose Him for such a place.

With me it is so different; I have not one thing to plead,
That I should be more honored than another bruised reed;
And truly there's no reason to give me a mite of praise;
To Him belongs all glory for the joys which crown my days.

If you knew all my failings, and my blemishes so vile,
And saw the loving patience my Father shows the while,
'Twould amaze you beyond measure to think He could or would
Make me an able servant who should do His people good.

But if to Him such praise is due because of what I am—
Because of such a weakling He has made a stronger man,
Then what will be His glory when He's raised me higher still,
And crowned me with His choicest on the top of Zion's Hill?

That all these years of striving find me so imperfect still,
Does not speak much to my credit nor give a happy thrill;
Where I appear as worthy 'tis because His grace is there,
And in the praise and glory I deserve no part, no share.

I hate my faults and failings, and I fight them day by day,
But from self with all its weaknesses I cannot get away;
Despite this fact, He uses me—beyond is still more grace—
And hosts will tell His glory—His who found poor me a place.—Z. '12: 34.

KERNELS KERNELS KERNELS

The Apostles Peter and James emphasize the necessity on the part of the Lord's people that they be clothed with humility. They tell us that this grace is indispensable to those who would abide in the Father's favor; for God resists the proud, while He continually shows favor to those who are of humble spirit. Thus He encourages humility and discourages pride. (1 Peter 5:5; James 4:6.) We can see a reason for this course. The Almighty sees that we have nothing whatever of which to be proud or to boast. Whatever we have has been of the Lord's providence, or favoring circumstances.—Z. '16:35, 36.

◇

Acceptable service, like acceptable praise, must come as a fruitage of love to the Lord. He who loves much will serve much. Salaries cannot purchase this kind of service, and persecutions cannot hinder it.

Whoever was privileged to serve the Lord Jesus personally was certainly highly privileged. And yet we may be sure of the general principle laid down in our text, that whoever serves any whom the Lord classes as His brethren is really serving Him. He accepts the same as service to Himself. How precious this thought, and how valuable it is! What wonder that all who truly believe the Lord's Word should be zealous in their service of their brethren! As the Apostle suggests, we ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren, even as Christ died for all.—Z. '13:378.

◇

The Christian who has not the shield of faith, and a **large** one, is continually at a disadvantage before the Adversary, and all the hosts of evil.

Then let each one who realizes a lack in this direction pray earnestly, as the Apostles of old, "Lord, increase our faith!" And then, acting in harmony with this prayer, let such a one cultivate such faith in his or her own heart. (1) Let him refresh his memory continually with the precious promises of the Word, becoming very familiar with these. (2) Let him seek more and more to remember that, having made a covenant with the Lord, these promises are **his**; and in his **heart** and with his **lips** let him claim them as **his** before the Throne of Grace, with thanksgiving. Let him claim them in his **thoughts**, and in his conferences on holy things with the brethren.

When trials and difficulties arise, he should call to mind these precious promises, remembering that they **belong to** him, because God has given these promises to such as love Him and have made a covenant with Him by sacrifice. (Psalm 50:5; Malachi 3:17.) He should resolve that henceforth he will trust the Word of his Heavenly Father implicitly. If some seeming accident befall him, let him call to mind the promise, **"All things work together for good to them that love God, who are called according to His purpose."** (Romans 8:28.) Let him thus assure himself that the **seeming** accident could not have occurred had God not seen a way to make it the channel of a needed lesson or blessing to him.—Z. '14:90.

◇

THE MEASURE OF OUR LOVE FOR THE BRETHREN

It does not astonish us that the Master directs His disciples to love one another. But we stand amazed with the thought contained in the words, "As I have loved you." (John 15:12.) How can we love one another with the same love which the Lord has for each of us? we inquire. The reply is that while at first this is impossible, yet as we become more and more filled with the Lord's Spirit we approximate more nearly to this standard of perfect love to all that are His—a love that not only refuses to do injury to another, but delights to do good to a brother, yea, to do good at the expense of one's own time and convenience. Thus Jesus loved us all, and redeemed us with His precious blood; and to whatever extent we grow in grace, knowledge and love of Him, to that same extent we are Christlike and have a Christlike love. This love is the fulfilling of the Law.—Z. '17:140.

◇

The steps of the world are not ordered of the Lord. But God's people in proportion as they walk by faith and realize that **"all things are working together for good to them that love God, to the called according to His purpose,"** in that proportion will they be able to have joy, blessing and peace in every experience that comes to them. Failing to do this, some of God's people, we continue to see, are fretting and chafing, feeling that things are working wrong with them, fearing that the Lord has forgotten them, or that the brethren have forgotten them, and that everything is amiss in their case. They are failing to recognize that **God** has to do with all back setting. If He sees best not to promote them, not to use their talents for a time as they would like, let them learn a lesson of humility and submission, of patience and trust. Let them be willing to cheerfully await God's own good time for their promotion.

To us, then, the great lesson is that promotion, exaltation, cometh neither from the East nor the West nor the South, but from Jehovah, who alone is the Judge, who setteth up one and putteth down another—and all in love. If the putting down seems at times to be the result of mistakes or lack of appreciation on the part of the brethren, let us remember that it has come in the providence of the Lord, and is designed of Him for our good, and perhaps for the good of others in one way or another. The experience will prove a blessing if received in the right spirit. "No good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly." Nothing can by any means hurt us if we keep close to the Lord. Then in due time, we shall be promoted to sit with Christ in His Throne.—Z. '15:187.

Not egotistically, but for Timothy's encouragement, St. Paul wrote, "I have fought a good fight. I have finished my course. I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the Righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." (2 Timothy 7, 8.) What a grand testimony—and at the conclusion of a grand life nobly lived, or rather nobly sacrificed, after the Lord's example, laying down his life for the brethren! He suffered for Christ's sake, as a servant of his Gospel message. How grand the incentive for us who are seeking to walk in the same narrow way! Our opportunities for sacrifice and service are less indeed, but the Lord reckons to each of us accordng to the heart, the intent. He that is faithful in that which is least would be faithful in greater things. He that is unfaithful in little things gives no proof that he would use large opportunities properly.—Z. '09:362.

◇

There are times when positiveness is absolutely necessary, even though it cause a division amongst those who profess to serve the same God. There are times when much more good can be obtained thus than by a continuance under disadvantageous conditions. Oil and water will not mix, and time spent in trying to blend them is altogether wasted. —Z. '09:185.

◇

Following the example of our Lord, we are to lay down our lives in the service of the brethren. This command is not so much for their **need** of our self-sacrifice as for **our need** of it, as a development of our love and as a test of our love. As the Apostle says, "We ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren."—Z. '09:323.

◇

Touch a man's pride and you arouse his whole being. Blessed, therefore, and favorably conditioned are the humble, the meek and the lowly of heart. They are not only better prepared to receive the good tidings respecting the Kingdom, but will be better prepared to follow the footsteps of the Master in the attainment of the Kingdom.—Z. '05:59.

◇

Question.—How near to the character-likeness of our Lord Jesus Christ must one attain on this side the veil in order to have good hope of being one of the Elect on the other side of the veil?

Answer.—Jehovah God will not accept **anything that is imperfect.** Even our human nature presented to Him sacrificially by the High Priest needed first to be covered by the merit of the Priest Himself and to be thus perfected before being Divinely accepted. In thinking of ourselves, however, we are to remember that we have the New Creature in an **earthen vessel.** It is the **New Creature** that must have the likeness of Christ.

In the flesh we are beset by the world, the flesh and the Devil.' All these things conspire to hinder the New Creature from working perfectly in the **old body. The will** must be nothing less than **perfect.** As Jesus said, "Blessed are the pure in **heart.**" (Matt. 5:8.) Purity of heart must be **absolute.**

The pure of heart are those whose **intentions** are pure, whose **motives** are pure, who desire the **best—long for** the best. These may have strong consolation, may have full confidence toward God respecting the glorious things He has promised: for they could do no more than the best they are able to do **in the mortal body**—and thus show their devotion. —Z. '13:191.

◇

We do see that the Lord has indicated that humility is one of the chiefest graces amongst his people, and that without it we would be unfit for the Kingdom. We do see that even though the Truth appeals chiefly to the humble-minded, even though the Lord favors these alone in connection with his work, nevertheless they are in great danger of stumbling along this very line. At no time has there been greater danger than at present. The feet-class will need to be specially upheld by the Lord that they stumble not through pride or boastfulness or self-conceit. So many and so great are our privileges in connection with the knowledge of the Lord and his glorious plan, that if we for one moment think of these as being in any sense of the word our own, we begin to lose our humility and to be in danger of the sin of pride and self-assertion. Our only safety is in continually watching and praying lest we enter into temptation—lest we should think of the truths we are honoring as being in any sense our own. Surely we have nothing that we have not received of the Lord—nothing, therefore, of which we ourselves could boast. Appropriately, then, let our boast be of the Lord and his greatness and his goodness to us and to all. Humbling ourselves thus under the mighty hand of God we shall be kept from the self-assertion which was Moses' sin, and which typified a difficulty and cause of rejection in some of the Lord's prominent ones of Spiritual Israel. "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he might exalt you in due time," that you may be permitted to enter with the Lord's hosts into the glorious Kingdom in due time.—1 Pet. 5:6; Z. '07:253.

◇

Love may permit us to give them **more** than justice could require, but **justice** demands that we must **never give them less** than due.—Z. '16:116.

◇

How blessed to think of "the rest that remaineth for the people of God," as well as to enjoy a goodly share of it even while yet in the enemy's country: yet how blessed, also, is the thought that our present opportunities for using our mortal bodies in the service of our Lord and his cause are but the prelude to the greater and more satisfactory works of grace we shall be privileged to engage in with our dear Redeemer throughout the glorious "times of restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began."—Acts 3:19-21; Z. '06:303.

◇

Each Christian should be daily on the alert to overcome the little weaknesses, the little frailties—to become conquerors in the little battles with selfishness, anger, malice, envy, evil-speaking. Victories over these, and experiences gained with God's help in overcoming these, give preparation step by step for the greatest trials and the grandest victories.—Z. '15:104.

A WINTON

Old Corn Gems

NUMBER SEVENTY-FIVE

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The Bridegroom's Dove

Cant. 2:14.

"My Dove!" The Bridegroom speaks to whom?
Whom think'st thou, meaneth He?
Say, O my soul! canst thou presume
He thus addresseth thee?
Yes, 'tis the Bridegroom's voice of love,
Calling thee, O my soul! His dove!

The Dove is gentle, mild and meek:
Deserve I, then, the name?
I look within in vain to seek
Aught which can give a claim:
Yet, made so by redeeming love,
My soul, thou art the Bridegroom's Dove!

Methinks, my soul, that thou may'st see,
In this endearing word,
Reasons why Jesus likens thee
To this defenceless bird:
Reasons which show the Bridegroom's love
To His poor helpless, timid Dove!

The Dove hath neither claw nor sting,
Nor weapon for the fight:
She owes her safety to her wing,
Her victory to flight.
A shelter hath the Bridegroom's love
Provided for His helpless Dove!

As the poor Dove, before the Hawk,
Quick to her refuge flies,
So need I, in my daily walk,
The wings which faith supplies
To bear me where the Bridegroom's love
Places beyond all harm His Dove!

My soul, of native power bereft,
To Calvary repairs:
Immanuel is the rocky cleft
The secret of the stairs!
Since placed there by the Bridegroom's love,
What evil can befall His Dove?

My soul, now hid within a rock,
(The "Rock of Ages" called),
Amid the universal shock
Is fearless, unappalled.
A cleft therein, prepared by love,
In safety hides the Bridegroom's Dove!

O happy Dove! thus weak, thus safe;
Do I resemble her?
Then to my soul, O Lord! vouchsafe
A dove-like character.
Pure, harmless, gentle, full of love,
Make me in spirit, Lord, a Dove!—Z. '06:118.

Never were the words of the Apostle Paul—"Let us watch and be sober"—more applicable than now. Accompanying the momentous events that usher in the New Dispensation are special trials and difficulties, not only to the world, but also to the Church. The Apostle says, "Ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief." But "as a snare will it come on all them that dwell on the earth." All except the brethren will be surprised, disappointed, chagrined, found unprepared and more or less overtaken. But the brethren, because they have been feeding at the Lord's table, and are strong in His might, will not be overtaken unawares.—Z. '15:54.

◆

"Their angels do always have access to the Father," was the comment of the Lord Jesus respecting His followers. It is a part of their business to look after the interests of the consecrated members of the Body of Christ and to deliver them from everything that would not be for their advantage, in harmony with the assurance that "all things shall work together for good to those who love God." But it is the interest, the good, of the New Creature that is being considered and not the interests of the flesh. These messengers, no less powerful, are invisible throughout the Gospel Age because the Lord would have the members of the House of Sons walk by faith and not by sight.—2 Corinthians 5:7; Z. '15:9.

◆

Yes, love; supreme love to God and then to the neighbor as to self, is that disposition of heart that will make us victorious in every trial and temptation. In its operations toward God it lays hold by faith upon his mighty power; it trusts his wisdom and his guidance: it takes his standpoint of observation and patiently waits the outworking of his deep designs, rejoicing in hope: and is persevering and faithful through all the painful processes that lead on to victory. In its operations toward our fellowmen it is pure, peaceable, kind, forbearing, gentle, sympathetic, tender, and in strict conformity to the golden rule.—Z. '06:246.

◆

Only the few can exercise the great faith that is necessary to a place in the Heavenly reward as members of His Bride class.—Z. '14:379.

CENTRAL CONVENTION

Minneapolis, Minn., Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday, March 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th, at the Bloomington Hall, 2415 Bloomington Avenue. Brothers Heard and Zinck will serve, and Brother Oscar Kuenzi will be chairman. Programme will be printed in Old Corn Gems No. 76. All Standfast Bible Students will be cordially welcome. For further information please write Brother G. E. F. Rubin, 4219 Nineteenth Avenue South, Minneapolis, Minn.

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OLD CORN GEMS

NUMBER SEVENTY-FIVE

"And they did eat of the OLD CORN of the land on the morrow after the Passover . . . and the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the OLD CORN of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year." Joshua 5:11-12.

A SAFE RULE

"WHERE A BROTHER GIVES AN INTERPRETATION OF A SCRIPTURE WHICH DIFFERS FROM THAT GIVEN BY BROTHER RUSSELL, AND BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION SEEMS REASONABLE AND IN HARMONY WITH THE PLAN OF GOD, THEN WE BELIEVE IT A SAFE RULE TO FOLLOW BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION, FOR THE REASON THAT HE IS THE SERVANT OF THE CHURCH, SO CONSTITUTED BY THE LORD FOR THE LAODICEAN PERIOD; AND THEREFORE WE SHOULD EXPECT THE LORD TO TEACH US THROUGH HIM. WHERE THERE ARISES A DOUBT IN THE MIND AS TO WHICH INTERPRETATION IS CORRECT, THEN IT IS ALWAYS SAFER TO RESOLVE THAT DOUBT IN FAVOR OF BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION. WE BELIEVE SUCH TO BE IN HARMONY WITH THE LORD'S WILL." Z. '18:51.

The Contrast of Human Perfection and Human Depravity

> "And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, 'They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots.' And sitting down they watched him there."
> —Matt. 27:35, 36.

HERE, in marked contrast, are seen the glory of moral perfection and the depth of human depravity. Here was the most sublime heroism, the most perfect self-abnegation, the most exalted benevolence, and the most devoted loyalty, in contrast with the vilest hypocrisy, the most cold-blooded hate, and the most abject cowardice. The meanest, vilest selfishness, pride and conceit delivered to ignominy and death the fairest flower of virtue that ever bloomed on earth, and wicked hands and fiendish hearts executed the dark designs of envy and hate, taking a morbid pleasure in the dying agonies of the Son of God, while he, as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, opened not his mouth in self-defence, but meekly submitted to the terrible ordeal of suffering and death for the world of sinners, none of whom could then appreciate and understand his motives or his work. Truly, the contrast of such virtue, in comparison with such depravity, encircles the Cross of Christ with a halo of ineffable glory, the broken rays of which, falling upon us, express to us all there is of moral excellence and worth.

In the apprehension, arraignment and crucifixion of Christ three classes of criminals come to view. First, there were those who, for envy, delivered him to death. They were the proud, boastful, self-righteous hypocrites, who, realizing their own inferiority, and aware of their own unfitness to be the leaders and saviors of the people, yet so anxiously craved the honors and praises of men and the emoluments of office that they could not brook the appearance of a rival of superior talents and ability. These hated the Lord without a cause, save that which originated in their own depravity. These, the mighty men of the Jewish nation, the rulers and religious teachers, the educated men of the nation, the expounders of the law of God, and the interpreters of the prophets,—these wickedly took counsel together against the Lord and against his Anointed; and in their counsels among themselves they acknowledged the superiority of the victim of their hate and expressed the real animus of it—their envy of his rising fame and influence among the people, which tended to their own speedy displacement.

Second, there were those cringing, hireling menials, too basely selfish to spurn a bribe or to appreciate a principle, and who are ever willing to sacrifice principle for a trifle of present advantage or gratification. Of this class was Judas, who sold the Lord for thirty pieces of silver, and also all of that infuriated mob which, incited by the priests, cried "Away with him! Crucify him! We have no king but Caesar! His blood be upon us and upon our children!" Judas loved the money, and these loved the approval of the priests and rulers, and wanted to be on the popular side. How mean the bribe, how base the crime!

Third, there were those cold-blooded, cruel servants of the Roman state who, presuming to have no responsibility in the matter, cared nothing for the honor of justice or the vindication of right. It was their business to execute the mandates of their superiors, and they must do so at their own peril. Looking to their own interests, therefore, it was their business to drive the nails through the quivering flesh and to plant the thorny crown upon the victim's head. It was an awful business, but they were schooled to it, so that the groans of anguish failed to reach their hearts. So, regarding the horrid transaction in the light of **business,** they thought only of their booty, and, with frigid indifference, sat down and watched the agony of the Lord, while they cast lots upon his vesture. And some even endeavored to add to the sufferings by cruel taunts and fiendish exultation.

How strange it seems that humanity, originally in the likeness of God, can sink so low! and yet it is all too true. The depth of depravity to which an intelligent being can sink can be measured only by the height of the original perfection and glory. Satan fell from a great height to a corresponding depth, and so likewise man falls to the very depths of iniquity, unless he repent and be converted from the error of his way, and voluntarily submit to the healing influences of divine grace. Sin, with accelerating speed, ever tends downward to more and more vile conditions, until it ends in the shipwreck of everything that is noble and pure; and "sin when it is finished bringeth forth death."

As we look at the various manifestations of wickedness on the part of those who crucified the Lord, it is a sad comment upon human depravity to notice that the very same elements have been in the world ever since; and alas! are present still. And the special victims of their hate have been, and still are, the meek of the earth, who have taken up their cross to follow in the footprints of the crucified One—the body of Christ which fills up the measure of his sufferings. (Col. 1:24.) All through the age there have been those anxious to deliver them to death, who, for envy, hypocritically assumed to be the representatives of God to condemn them, and to seek them out, and hunt them down, and kill their influence, and deliver them over to be crucified. This is the **Pharisaical class**—the class represented by the chief priests, the scribes and Pharisees. There has also always been the hireling class, ready to sell their services to such leaders for the paltry bribes they have to offer—for the favor of their leaders, for the convenience of being on the popular side, or for a trifle of financial or social advantage. This is the **Judas class**—a class which, like Judas and like the priests and scribes and Pharisees, know, and secretly recognize, the truth and righteousness exemplified in the body of Christ, yet who nevertheless dislike them, hate them, and are ever willing to make merchandise of them,—to deliver them over to scorn and contempt, if not, as in former times, to prison and to death, for the mean advantage of popular favor.

Then there are still the cruel **cold-blooded menials** who, with complacency and indifference, and yet with curiosity, sit down and watch the sufferings of the body, and wonder what will happen next. They are surprised and puzzled by the fortitude which daily takes up the cross and follows after Christ; they cannot understand the motives that inspire it; they have no faith in the rewards to which the consecrated look, and they curiously watch them to see if, perchance, their God will interpose and deliver them. And when they see no miraculous interposition in their behalf, but that instead they bear the cross to the bitter end of sacrifice, they regard them, like their Head, as "smitten of God and afflicted," and to the sufferings are added their reproaches. And so every member of the anointed body can say with the Head, "The reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me."

The important concern to all who are thus suffering with Christ in any measure is that they bear it with the same humility, benevolence and fortitude that characterized him under the most crucial tests of endurance. He was not surprised by the exhibitions of human depravity; he knew that he was in an unfriendly world bound by sin and largely under the dominion of the prince of darkness, and therefore he expected reproaches, taunts and persecutions, all of which he endured patiently while his great loving heart, almost unmindful of its own sufferings, was full of pity and of loving concern for others. Have we indeed so much of the Master's spirit that we can thus suffer with Christ, meekly bearing reproach and trusting to heaven's vindication of us in due time? "If when ye do well and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God; for even hereunto were ye called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that ye should follow his steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered he threatened not, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously." Therefore let us "consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest we be wearied and faint in our minds." (1 Pet. 2:20-23; Heb. 12:3.) And let us also see to it that we bear the reproaches of Christ as he bore them,—with pity and prayer for the erring and depraved, if perchance God may grant unto them repentance; and with humble fortitude esteeming it a privilege to prove our devotion to the Lord by enduring hardness in his service as good soldiers.

But what shall we say of those who hate the Lord's body without a cause, who for envy deliver them to persecution and death, or of those who for bribes betray the innocent, or of those who, with frigid indifference, but curious interest, calmly watch the sufferings of the body, as the Roman soldiers did of the Head, saying, "Let be, let us see whether Elias will come to save him?" "O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honor, be not thou united." Their way is the way of death. When the noble spectacle of loyalty to God, to truth and righteousness, and of Christian fortitude in enduring hardness and persecution meekly and patiently, fails to move and win the hearts of men, what more remains to be done for them? The goodness of God exemplified in his children as well as in other ways should lead to repentance; but if it only hardens the heart and steels it against the further influences of divine grace, sad indeed is the condition of such a soul. It is not ours, however, to judge such to condemnation; but it is our part to shun the company and counsels of all such. "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful: but his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. . . . For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish." —Psa. 1:1, 2, 6; Z. '96:82-84.

Communing With the Lord

Luke 24:13-35.

"Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked with us by the way?"

"A LITTLE talk with Jesus, how it cheers our lonely way!" writes the poet, and who that is a Christian has failed of this experience? And fortunate are those who early learn, that while we should greatly appreciate our privilege of talking with the Lord, in prayer, we are to recognize that it is not this that brings the full blessing; but our attentive hearing, understanding and appreciating what he says to us:—the Word of Truth. Our hearts burn while he talks and we listen, more than when we talk even to him.

Toward evening of the day of our Lord's resurrection: two of his followers, one of them apparently Simon Peter (vs. 34), the other Cleopas, passed along the country road leading from Jerusalem to Emmaus, about eight miles distant, evidently the home of Cleopas who would entertain Peter, whose home was in Galilee. Like all the followers of Jesus they had been greatly exercised and perturbed by the remarkable events connected with our Lord's last visit, in connection with the Passover—his triumphal entry into Jerusalem; the cleansing of the Temple; the routing of his ecclesiastical foes in debate; his remarkable teachings during those few days; his arrest, trial and crucifixion. The excitement of their hearts made other business for the time impossible, and they spent the day in Jerusalem probably without knowing just why, except that they desired to be in touch with fellow believers. They shared with all the Lord's friends in the considerable excitement, resulting from the reports given by the sisters who went to embalm our Lord's body, that the tomb was empty and that they had seen angels who said that Jesus was alive again.

Full of the subject so close to their hearts, they were discussing in animated conversation the likelihood and unlikelihood of the reports they had heard, and in general the Messianic hopes of themselves and their nation, which they had trusted would have been amply fulfilled by Jesus, whose death seemed to throw all of their expectations into confusion. It was at this juncture that Jesus was drawing near them, disguised in a body of flesh and ordinary clothing—with a face different from what they had previously recognized, yet nevertheless gentle, soothing, sympathetic. He inquired the occasion of their discussion, which seemed to be respecting some sad subject. This kindly interest was not resented as an intrusion, but rather their burdened hearts rejoiced to find a sympathetic ear to which their perplexities could be related. How much of human nature there is in all this! How favorable is a time of adversity and perplexity in which to approach those whom we desire to assist; but how necessary it is that we should learn of the Master how to approach with such sympathy in word and act as to gain the hearts of those whom we would serve and bless. Love is the secret of gentleness, of sympathy, of all real heart-helpfulness. In order to be more useful in life, the Lord's people need to become more and more filled with his spirit of love:—copies of God's dear Son.

It was no deception on our Lord's part to inquire what things they were sad about, although he knew everything better than they. It is sometimes the part of wisdom not to tell all that we know, if we can the better help others by inquiring of them. In this instance we can see the wisdom of our Lord's course, for the minds of the two travelers were lifted from any points of disputation and drawn to a general review of the circumstances of the preceding days, and this furnished the best foundation for our Lord's exposition of the meaning of and the reason for the things which perplexed them.

Jesus did not reply to their surprised expression that he must be a newcomer in the city not to have heard of the wonderful things that had recently transpired. He let them proceed to declare their faith in him and how they viewed the situation. The portion of their conversation recorded implies clearly that however much their confidence might have been shaken respecting our Lord's Messiahship, and their hopes, that it would have been he that would have redeemed (delivered) Israel from the Roman yoke and exalted her as God's agency, the seed of Abraham, for blessing all the families of the earth, they still believed in him as a great Teacher, a prophet —"mighty in deed and word before God and all the people." This was a good confession, all that could have been asked, and quite sufficient for our Lord to use in rebuilding their confidence in himself, in his Messiahship—on a surer, a better, a more positive foundation.

While it was expedient for him to start the matter by questioning them, it would not have been wisdom to have continued thus to any great length: for he had the message, they needed the instruction. . . .

Spellbound with this wonderful exposition of the divine Word, his listeners drank it in, realizing its truth by the manner in which it harmonized the various testimonies of God's Word. . . .

The eight miles of the journey seemed all too short, as they reached their home, and they were loath to part with the wonderful teacher, whom they supposed they had fallen in with by accident, never dreaming to what extent divine providence was guiding their affairs. It was drawing toward evening, and the stranger was bidding them adieu, as though intent upon a further journey: and indeed, he surely would have gone from them had they not been sufficiently appreciative of what they had already heard to constrain him earnestly to remain with them and partake of their hospitalities. So it is with all of us, as the Lord's disciples whom he is instructing, after we have been taught of him. If our hearts fail to burn with responsive love and zeal and appreciation, the blessing will pass from us and we will fail to reach the climax of joy in a full recognition of who our Teacher has been. While the Lord draws nigh to us with his grace and truth, without solicitation, he passes us by unless his message is appreciated so that we shall constrain him, urge him to abide with us, to continue the conversation—unless we shall proffer him in turn our hospitalities, our temporal things, in endeavoring to make some slight recompense for the spiritual favors showered upon us.

Our Lord accepted their urgent invitation and remained; supper was prepared, and recognizing their new acquaintance as a great teacher or prophet they requested that he should return thanks for their evening meal. It was while he was thus asking a blessing upon it and upon them that the eyes of their understanding were opened—it dawned upon them that their guest was no other than Jesus himself! Perhaps the language used in the blessing was such as they had heard him use before, or perhaps in some other way their understanding was opened.

Having accomplished his purpose, our Lord vanished from their sight. Thus, in addition to the instruction impressed upon their minds, he showed them by this vanishing that he was no longer the **man** Christ Jesus—that he was "changed"—that the resurrected Jesus was a **spirit being,** who could come and go like the wind, as he had explained to Nicodemus (John 3:8), appearing and disappearing, as he had never done previously, but as angels had frequently done. Moreover, they realized from this illustration that our Lord could appear in any kind of a body, and with any kind of clothing, as might best serve his purposes. They did not know him by the marks in his hands and his feet, nor by the seamless robe; for he had not appeared to them in these, but in **another form,** as an ordinary traveler whose features they did not recognize. Had he borne the prints of the nails in his hands and feet they surely would have noticed them during their long walk; just as Mary would surely have noticed them when she grasped our Lord by the feet. But they had an explanation of the whole matter now; they understood why this stranger had been able to present the divine word with such clearness and force and beauty as to cause their hearts to burn with fresh love and zeal and hope. They were glad.

Let us pause here to note some of the conditions which evidently led up to this blessing, that we may apply the same to ourselves, realizing that our Lord operates very generally along the lines of fixed principles, and that if we would be the recipients of his special favor and instruction, and have our hearts burn with the spirit of his truth, we should expect such experiences along somewhat similar lines to those observed in connection with the two who went to Emmaus. We remark, first, that this is an illustration of our Lord's promise that where two or three are together in his name—considering him, his word, his promises, his blessings—there he will be in the midst, and a blessing shall result. This may be in a country road, in the home circle, or in the more general gatherings of the Lord's people for worship, prayer and study of the truth. How this reminds us of the injunction, "Forget not the assembling of yourselves—and so much the more as ye see **the day** drawing on." Who has not noticed the blessing that comes to those who remember these promises of the Lord's Word, and who act upon them? Who has not noticed in his own experience, as well as in that of others, the danger of neglecting these admonitions—the danger of doubts, fears, indifference, coldness, worldliness? It is undoubtedly true today, as much as or more than ever, that we need such fellowship, and it is to such who seek it that the Lord reveals himself.

Let us mark again the word of the Prophet, "They that feared the Lord **spake often** together; and the Lord hearkened and heard it," and noted it in the book of remembrance. Let us remember, too, that it is declared of such, "They shall be mine, saith the Lord, in the day that I make up my jewels." (Mal. 3:16-18.) We are not saying that others will not be the Lord's, nor does the Lord say so; but we may be well assured that those who have opportunities for meeting together and speaking together, and who fail to use the opportunities, are manifesting a lack of interest in our great salvation; and that such are very likely to lose the remainder of their interest, and failing of the Lord's instruction given to such, that they may fail also to be amongst the "jewels" whom he will gather. If on the contrary one feels little interest in the heavenly things, little disposed to discuss the features of the divine plan and its promises, and happy only when conversing on worldly matters, business, etc., it is an unfavorable sign. The Lord is not likely to approach such and open their understanding respecting the Scriptures, as he surely is pleased to do to those who are hungering and thirsting after truth.

Many are so situated that they are unable to gratify the desires of their hearts in respect to assembling frequently with others of like precious faith, to talk over the good things of the Lord's Word of promise; but the isolated should not feel disappointed that the Lord's Word says that he will meet with the twos and threes, and does not promise the same to the solitary. They should rather look about them to see what provision the Lord has made whereby at least two can meet and discuss his Word together. We suggest, dear friends, that the Master has made special arrangements for all of his people in this respect in our day; for all who so desire may have such a meeting at least twice a month, through the regular visits of this journal. . . . We believe this is a divine provision for the necessities of many, and we urge that all avail themselves of this as well as of every other privilege the Lord may grant for fellowship, for communion in spiritual things. The written message is not different from the spoken one. . . .

As soon as the Emmaus brethren recognized their guest, and he vanished, they understood well the meaning of the joy, the refreshment and the burning zeal in their hearts which his expositions of the truth had inspired. They had thus a confirmation of the words of the angels to the sisters in the morning, that Jesus was risen. The news was too good to be kept, even until the next morning. They must and did start immediately for the city, although it was a journey of at least eight miles. How different their feelings as they set out in return from those when they left the brethren at Jerusalem, their hearts sad and their minds full of questionings! Now they were full of joy; for they saw that our

Lord's crucifixion, so far from being the end of their hopes, was really the foundation for them; that as our Lord explained, "Thus it behooved Messiah to suffer before he would enter into his glory"—that unless he had suffered—died—the race would not have been purchased at the hands of Justice, and the condemnation of death would still rest upon it and make any permanent blessing impossible; but now, the redemption price having been paid, the way was open, first for the reconciliation of the Royal Priesthood who should be joint-heirs with Jesus as the Seed of Abraham, and subsequently, in God's due time, would follow the times of restitution of all things, the blessing of all the families of the earth.

Some such thoughts as these engaged them as they returned to Jerusalem, and arriving at the upper room found the eleven (except Thomas—the term "eleven" being used in a general sense, and not a particular sense, as referring to the apostles in general and not to the exact number) with others of the company assembled. Then there was general rejoicing in the information that Jesus had revealed himself to Peter, as they related their joyful experiences, and how the Lord had been known to them in the breaking of the bread and the asking of the blessing. Doubtless it was this experience that led subsequently to the custom of the disciples having a meal in common on every first day of the week, at which they again in imagination recognized the Lord present in their midst, blessing the bread and opening the eyes of their understanding. Thus each first day of the week they called to mind how he opened unto them the Scriptures and sought to keep the eyes of their understanding open and to grow in grace, in knowledge and in love.—Z. '01:134-137.

I Am My Beloved's, and My Beloved is Mine

Solomon's Song 6:3.

RIGHTLY understood we find the Bible to be a love story of surpassing interest. No earthly love story will compare with it. First, we have the Father's love for our race, which, originally created in his likeness, fell by disobedience under just condemnation. What a wonderful story of parental Love blended with Divine Justice is conveyed to us in the narrative of how God so loved the world while we were yet sinners, that he gave his Only Begotten Son to be our Redeemer, that he might restore again to Divine favor and blessing whosoever wills to return after learning of his loving provision. How different this view of the Divine character and Plan from the one which once terrorized us—when we thought of God as almighty in power and knowledge, but destitute of love and sympathy. . . .

Relief to Know That God Is Really a God of Love

What a relief do we experience as finally we awake to a better knowledge of God and of his precious Word, to find that all the teachings of the Dark Ages were but a horrible nightmare, as unreal as they were cruel and unjust—as unscriptural as they are contrary to every reasonable conception of every reasonable mind, of the proper exercise of Justice, Wisdom, Love and Power—the Divine attributes. . . . We have learned, in the language of Scripture, that "their fear toward me is taught by the precepts of men," and not by any of the Divine precepts.—Isa. 29:13.

Oh, what a relief it has brought to our hearts to know God as really and truly a God of love, who is not only willing to save unto the uttermost, but able to save unto the uttermost all who put their trust in him! and who is so willing thus to save that he has made abundant provision that every member of Adam's race must come to a clear knowledge of his grace and to a full opportunity—by obedience to the extent of his ability—to attain eternal life through Christ Jesus.

It does us good at times to look back and view, not only the horrible pit and miry clay of sin out of which Jehovah lifted us when he placed our feet upon the Rock, Christ Jesus, but also to remember his mercy toward us in the anointing of our eyes, now in the end of the Age, that we may see wonderful things in his Word; that we may realize how he has graciously brought us "out of darkness into his marvelous light," in permitting us to brush away the veil of superstition, misunderstanding and mistranslation which has befogged his Word, beclouded our understanding and bedimmed our view and appreciation of the great Father of lights, from whom cometh every good and every perfect gift.—James 1:17.

Not One, But Many Individuals Chosen To Be Bride of Christ

But our text deals specially with another part of this great love story of the Scriptures. Our loving Father, having provided a redemption for all our race through Christ Jesus, did more: he highly honored and glorified our dear Redeemer as a reward for those things he endured faithfully through obedience to the Father (Phil. 2:8-11), and in addition to this arranged to select a Bride and joint-heir in glory for his Son, our Lord Jesus. It was not an individual that was chosen to be the Bride, but many individuals, and yet in all, compared with the world, a "little flock," the "elect Church," called to be "the Bride, the Lamb's Wife."

Of all the plots and peculiarities of love stories which have been conjured up by human brains, none will compare with this story of how Christ loved the Church and gave himself for her—redeeming her with his own life; and how, being rewarded with excellent glory by the Father, these who would be his companions, are invited to share his cross, his suffering, his death, and to be received up into glory with him, to share his love and his throne and the Father's favor. We will not go into details here;

we have done this before and our readers are familiar with every feature—so, instead, we pass on to consider some of the conditions of acceptance with the Bridegroom.

Only a Few Can Say From the Heart, "I Am My Beloved's"

Our text briefly, yet very pointedly, states the entire matter. (1) "I am my Beloved's."

There is no possibility for any one to get into this special elect class, "the Bride, the Lamb's Wife," without knowing it. There is therefore no possibility that heathen philosophers or others who lived and who died without a personal knowledge of Christ as their personal Savior, can ever be members of the elect Church, the Bride: all who are of it will be able to say, "I am my Beloved's." Very manifestly also, for the same reason, many who are Church members "in good and regular standing," have neither part nor lot in this matter; for only a few can say, from the heart, truly, "I am my Beloved's." This union with the Beloved (Christ) implies that the step of justification through repentance and faith in the precious blood has first taken place: because only the justified are "called." (2) It is implied that the one who can say, "I am my Beloved's," has not only heard of Christ but has made a definite, positive compact or contract with him. And this contract—to be his in every thought and word and deed, to the extent of our ability, if he will accept us and be our Bridegroom, is our marriage vow or covenant.

The Scriptures assure us that in the present time, while evil prevails and the God of this world blinds the minds of the vast majority, none can come to the Lord Jesus, except as the Father draws them. (John 6:44.) The Father is not drawing all mankind now, but only believers. He is leaving the general work of drawing the worldly for the next Age, the Messianic Age, when Christ and the Church glorified shall, as God's agents, cause the whole earth to be filled with the knowledge of the Truth. . . .

If Faithful It Is the Privilege of Each to Say, "My Beloved Is Mine"

It is proper that each one should decide for himself positively, whether or not he has ever accepted the Divine invitation to give himself (Prov. 23:26; Rom. 12:1) to the Lord, to be ultimately accepted as a member of his Bride if he continue faithful to his engagement to the end. If we are faithful, and so long as we continue to be faithful, it is our privilege to look up with confidence and be assured of the second part of our text, "My Beloved is mine." And if we will, it is possible for us to continue in this attitude, "faithful unto death"; and so doing we may know that in the resurrection we shall be with our Lord, and be like him, and share his glory and his throne.—Rev. 3:21.

How much is implied in this statement, "My Beloved is mine"! We are reminded of the Scripture which declares, "He that hath the Son hath life"—eternal life. More than this, the Apostle assures us that those who have Christ, who can truly, Scripturally say, "My Beloved is mine," are really possessors of **"all things."** For since Christ is the heir of all things, if we have become associates with him, then, indeed, "all things are yours (things present and things to come) for ye are Christ's and Christ is God's." (1 Cor. 3:22, 23.) If it lifted from us a great load to know that our sins were graciously forgiven through the merit of the precious blood how much more of a load of care does it lift from us to know that we are vitally united with the illustrious Son of the great King of the Universe—the Son in whom the Father is well pleased and whom he has made his sole associate in the glory and dominion of the Universe.

Nor does this promise of blessings in Christ apply merely to the future. The glories and honors truly are not now, but by and by to be revealed; **but the Bridegroom's care, protection, provision and comfort belong to his betrothed even now,** while we are in this tabernacle; so that while we are passing through the "valley of the shadow of death," we need fear no evil, for he is with us, and his rod and staff comfort us.

All who abide faithful to him, all who truthfully can say, "I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine," have not only the promise of the life that is to come, but also the promise of this present life. They hear the Master's voice saying, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the Age," and in the end of the Age he is to be **specially** near, **specially** precious, and is to reveal himself to his faithful in an **especial** manner, **even before she is so changed as to behold him in his glory.**

All the "Exceeding Great and Precious Promises" Belong to This Class

It is the privilege of these to apply to themselves, and to realize as properly theirs, all the "exceeding, great and precious promises" of the Divine Word. These may hear the voice of the Lord, saying, I will be with thee in six troubles and in the seventh I will not forsake thee. "My grace is sufficient for thee." "Call upon me in the day of trouble and I will deliver thee." Indeed, we are assured and **"know that all things shall work together for good to them that love God, to the called ones according to his purpose** [to be the Bride, the Lamb's Wife]."—Job. 5:19; 2 Cor. 12:9; Psa. 50:15; Rom. 8:28.

These promises of the Lord have been well summed up in the expression of the poet:—

"In every condition, in sickness, in health,
In poverty's vale, or abounding in wealth,
At home and abroad, on the land or the sea,
As thy days may demand, shall thy strength ever be.

"When through the deep waters I call thee to go,
The rivers of woe shall not thee overflow;
For I will be with thee thy troubles to bless,
And sanctify to thee thy deepest distress.

"When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie,
My grace all-sufficient shall be thy supply;
The flames shall not hurt thee—I only design
Thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine."

What a blessing of peace, quietness of spirit, ability to endure hardness as a good soldier of Christ, and sustenance and strength in time of trial, lies behind these precious assurances of the Bridegroom to those who can see and realize unquestionably, "I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine," no tongue can express. It has in the past permitted his faithful ones to pass through many dark and trying experiences with a fortitude that has surprised the world, which has seen them in the fiery furnace, but has not seen that there is with them the form of the Son of God. (Dan. 3:25.) They have endured as seeing him who is invisible. (Heb. 11:27.) The poor world who know not this invisible Friend above all others, and are unacquainted with this Heavenly Bridegroom, and know not his sustaining grace in every hour of trial are, indeed, to be greatly pitied. They must largely bear alone those burdens which the Lord's people, his betrothed, are privileged to lay at the feet of the great Burden Bearer, whose invitation is, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

But, if the case of the world is a sad one, because it knows not our Bridegroom, how much worse is the case of those who having once known him, and having once experienced his tender care and helpfulness in all of life's affairs as a Counselor and Guide, have wandered off, having lost their first love; having forgotten that they were purged from their old sins, and become deaf to the "exceeding great and precious promises" pertaining to the present as well as to the future life; and are now striving merely for the things which perish, and which at most are but for a moment. (2 Cor. 4:17, 18.) These are in a much worse condition than the world.

As the Apostle declares, "It had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment."—2 Pet. 2:21.

Let us who have named the name of Christ, who have assumed his name, abide in him—by continuing in faith, in love and in zeal, to walk in his footsteps.—Z. '11:85-87.

1922—The Memorial Supper—1922

AGAIN we are approaching the anniversary of our dear Redeemer's crucifixion; once more we remind our readers of the lesson which years have taught many of us, namely, that for some unexplainable reason the Lord's consecrated people experience special trials and testings at this particular season—corresponding to our Lord's time of heaviness and sorrow, and the time of special testing amongst the early disciples. It was shortly before he went up to Jerusalem, foreknowing the crucifixion, that he explained it to the Apostles. It was then that he declared that only those who eat his flesh and drink his blood have life in them. Many of his close followers said, "This is a hard saying; who can receive it?" and walked no more with him.—John 6:60.

Shortly after, when telling the twelve of his approaching crucifixion, St. Peter brought upon himself a rebuke by saying, Far be it from thee, Lord. This thing shall not happen unto thee. But Jesus answered him, saying, Get thee behind me, Adversary, for thou savorest not of the things of God, but of the things of men. (Matt. 16:22, 23.) Your suggestions and advice are contrary to the Divine Program; it is necessary that the Son of man suffer sacrificially, that he might enter into his glory and accomplish his appointed work as the Savior of the Church and of the world—whosoever wills.

Later on, near the climax, we remember the special trial upon Judas, and how his love of money led him to oppose the anointing of the Master for his burial, and later on led him to sell that Master for thirty pieces of silver, and, later on, to betray him with a kiss. Still later we remember how all the disciples were disconcerted by the arrest of their Master and by his evident willingness to be arrested, so that they "all forsook him and fled." (Mark 14:50.) We remember how, still later, the noble St. Peter was overtaken in a serious fault and denied his Lord and Master, even with cursing.

Perhaps we partly imagine a parallel of testing on the Lord's people at this season of the year. And perhaps it is real and appropriate that the members of the Body of Christ should, in this particular at this season, have special trials, peculiar difficulties, testings of faith, obedience and loyalty.

The Lenten or Fasting Season

It would appear that thoughts along the line above suggested came to others long ago and led to the appointment of the Lenten Season as a time of special fasting and prayer amongst the consecrated ones of the Lord's family. Certain it is that for long centuries this fasting has been in observance in the Roman Church, in the English Church, in the German Church, and, to some extent, in others.

Although with the majority fasting has become a mere outward form and ceremony, without heart appreciation, and, therefore, not pleasing to the Lord, nevertheless we believe that some fasted from the best of motives in olden times, and that some still so fast. It is not for us to judge and individually condemn anybody, yet many, we are sure, will confess to just what we have charged in an indefinite way. It is impossible, of course, for any laws or regulations to be made which will govern the heart—they can scarcely govern the flesh, even in the most casual manner.

We do not approve of set rules and laws governing such matters. The suggestions should be quite sufficient for all those who heartily desire to practise abstemiousness in respect to diet. We have the Master's suggestion that after his departure his followers would fast. Several instances of such fastings are recorded in the Scriptures, and these may be considered proper examples for the Lord's followers, none of whom are under law, under command, in respect to meats or drinks or other earthly ordinances.

A measure of self-restraint in fasting is valuable to us physically, as well as spiritually—and particularly in the Spring of the year. The stronger foods necessary for the cold weather of winter are less necessary, as the weather becomes milder. Much of the Spring sickness is undoubtedly due to over-eating and may be considerably corrected by the observance of a measurable fast—restraint from the eating of dainties and rich food. And when the system is clogged with over-supply of nourishment, the brain becomes more stupid, impairing the higher mental powers, and particularly including those which connect us appreciatively with heavenly and spiritual things.

We throw out these suggestions without any desire to put a yoke or a law upon anybody, but wishing each to fast and pray according to the dictates of his own conscience and to receive spiritual blessings according to the degree of his fellowship with the Lord in this and in every matter.

The Date of the Memorial Supper

As we have previously remarked, our Lord gave no intimation such as many dear Christian people have imagined—namely, that the Memorial Supper should be celebrated weekly, monthly, bi-monthly, tri-monthly. Most evidently the Supper was instituted by all of the Jewish arrangements as an annual observance—to take the place of the Passover Type. There was a definiteness about the date of the type which would not necessarily attach to our celebration of the antitype. The type was intended to specifically mark the exact date on which our Lord would be crucified. Hence great particularity on the part of the Jews was appropriate. Now that the great fact of Jesus' death is a thing of the past, there seems not be as great necessity for particularity as to the exactness of a day or an hour.

Hence we see no objection to the custom followed by Episcopalians, Catholics and Lutherans of celebrating the Friday and the Sunday nearest to the anniversary of our Lord's death and resurrection, as Good Friday and Easter Sunday. Indeed, something may be said in favor of their custom, as it permits the anniversary to harmonize with the days of the week. However, for over thirty (forty) years we have been accustomed to observe this Memorial—the nearest that we know to its exact anniversary, according to the Jewish reckoning of time—on the preceding evening of the 14th day of the Jewish Month Nisan. In view of this long custom, and the fact that some might not see clearly any advantage of a change; in view of the fact also that some might become confused and think that they were following an error, it is our preference. We advise, therefore, that the exact date, according to the Jewish calendar, be followed.

This year the new moon of the Spring Equinox appears March 29th, thus constituting it the first day of the First Month, Jewish time. Our Lord was crucified on the 14th day of the First Month, which this year will be April 11th. But the Memorial Supper, commemorative of his death, was celebrated on the evening preceding and therefore we, according to our previous custom, recommend that all, with one heart and one mind, unite in celebrating the great Redeemer's death on Tuesday night, April 10th, after six o'clock. Even then, of course, we will not all be able to celebrate at the same hour, because of differences of time; but the celebration will be very nearly at the same hour. The thought of this general fellowship will add to the joy and solemnity of the occasion. We recommend that all who love the Lord and are fully consecrated to do his will, even unto death, join in this celebration, which means so much to all of us.

It first of all reminds us of our dear Redeemer's sacrifice on behalf of his Church and on behalf of all the families of the earth. It reminds us, secondly, that we have vowed unto the Lord to walk in his steps, to suffer with him, to drink of his cup, to be baptized with his baptism of death. Of course, the breaking of the bread and the sipping of the cup, memorially, is far less important than our participation in the realities, of which they are merely a figure. We must in our minds and hearts feed upon the broken body of Jesus and realize by faith that we partake first of all, imputedly, of justification of our flesh through him and that, through him, comes all our hopes of a future life.

Secondly, as represented by his cup, we must share his sorrows, be partakers of the sufferings of Christ, fill up that which is behind of his afflictions, in walking faithfully in his footsteps—even unto death. The cup which the Father poured for the Master he drank. And by the Grace of God we are privileged to share in his cup; for if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him. And if we escape the sufferings of Christ and fail to become living sacrifices with him, we will thereby also be escaping the glorious privileges of his Kingdom.—Z. '11: 40, 41.

The Story of Jesus in Review

Golden Text:—"His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."—Isa. 9:6.

MANY are the names of the Son of man—the man Christ Jesus, the Son of God, who was made flesh that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. The first name given in the list of the Prophet is called Wonderful, and is surely appropriate. His is the most wonderful career and the most wonderful character of which we have any knowledge. Who else than he left the glories of the heavenly state for human conditions? as he himself said, "No man hath ascended up to heaven save he which came down from heaven."

(John 3:13.) He alone left the glory which he had with the Father before the world was: he alone exercised that wonderful faith in the Father which permitted him to sacrifice everything with joy, delighting to do the Father's will, with confidence that in due time the rewards of the Father's favor and love would more than compensate for every sacrifice.

Wonderful, too, was his life amongst men, the Light shining in the darkness, the darkness comprehending it not. More and more as we come into the light ourselves we are able to comprehend this Wonderful One. As the Apostle suggests, the eyes of our understanding being opened we are able to comprehend with all saints the heights and depths and lengths and breadths of the love of God which passes all understanding, such love being manifested, exhibited, illustrated in this Wonderful One. Wonderful also was his resurrection, the "first that should rise from the dead," "the first-born amongst many brethren," "highly exalted, given a name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow."—Rom. 8:29; Col. 1:15, 18; Phil. 2:9, 10.

The second name on the list, "Counsellor," is also appropriate. Who else is such a Counsellor? Who else is able to be touched with the feeling of our infirmities? Who else is able always to guide us with his eye? Who else has assured us that **all things shall work together for our good?** Happy are they who have made the acquaintance of this Counsellor, whom God hath set forth to be the satisfaction for our sins and to be the Counsellor, the Leader, the Guide, the Instructor of his people, and to bring them out of darkness into his marvellous light, out of the chains of sin and bondage of death back to full liberty of the sons of God. Let us more and more heed the voice that speaketh from heaven, our Counsellor.

"The Mighty God," another of his names, is also appropriate. If the angels were called Elohim, gods, and if the angels appearing to men in the past were called Elohim, gods, because they were the representatives of divine power, surely much more appropriate is the name to him whom the Father specially sent as his special messenger to men. If elohim signifies a mighty one, surely he is above the other mighty ones, next to the Father himself, and may therefore most properly be termed the mighty Elohim—the Mighty God—the one mighty amongst the mighty. "Mighty to save" we sometimes sing; yea, says the Word of the Lord, "He is able to save unto the uttermost all who come unto the Father through him." (Heb. 7:25.) Such a mighty Savior we need, one not only able to sympathize with us and to instruct us, but able also to deliver us from the Evil One and from our own weaknesses as well as from the divine sentence against our race as sinners. Let us exult in this "Mighty One," whom the heavenly Father, Jehovah, has sent forth as the Arm of Jehovah for deliverance from sin and death.

The title "Everlasting Father" will in due time be appropriately his—but not yet. These words are a prophecy; some of them have been already fulfilled and others are yet to be fulfilled. When they were written Jesus had not yet left the heavenly glory. Jesus is not the everlasting Father to the Church. No; the Scriptures reveal him as our elder Brother, and again as our Bridegroom. The Apostle most explicitly tells us that Jehovah is our Father, saying, "The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ hath begotten us"—we are his children. The dear Redeemer himself taught us to pray, "Our Father which art in heaven"; and again after his resurrection he sent the message to Peter and others of his followers, "I ascend to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God."—John 20:17.

In due time he will be the everlasting Father to the world—to those of the world who, during the Millennial age, will hearken to his voice and receive of his life—restitution blessings. Jesus purchased Adam and all of his children by the sacrifice of himself: they are his, to make out of them everything possible and to bring as many as possible back into harmony with the Father and to eternal life. They died under divine condemnation; what they now need is life, and the Father has arranged that Jesus may be their Life-Giver, and to this end he has already given his life, purchased them, that in due time, during his Millennial Kingdom, he may offer them the return of all that was lost in Adam, for it is written, "He came to seek and to save that which was lost."

Since that life which Jesus will give to the world during the Millennial age is the fruitage of his own sacrifice, therefore he is said to be the Father, the Life-Giver to the world. And since the life that he will give will not be merely a temporary one, but by obedience to him all those who receive of his life may be brought to perfection, and maintain that life eternally, therefore he is the Everlasting Father. He gives the everlasting life in contradistinction to Adam, who attempted to be the Father to the race, but through his disobedience brought forth his children to a dying condition. Not so the everlasting life: the life which he gives to his children during the period of the Millennium, and which will accomplish the regeneration of the world, or of so many of the world as will accept his favor, will be unto life eternal.

Not yet is he the Prince of Peace and King of Glory, but very soon he will take unto himself his great power and reign. Far from peaceful will be its beginning. The Scriptural description is that the nations will be angry and divine wrath will come upon them, and that they shall be broken in pieces as a potter's vessel: that the Lord will speak to them in his sore displeasure, and that there will be a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation.—Psa. 2:5; Dan. 12:1.

But the Lord wounds to heal, he chastises to correct, and will not "keep his anger forever," but will ultimately prove that he is "plenteous in mercy." The result of his righteous indignation against sin and all unrighteousness and iniquity will be the establishment of justice upon a firm footing throughout the world. Then as a consequence peace will reign and the King of Glory will be known as the Prince of Peace, whose blessings will fill the earth for the refreshment of every creature and the bringing of so many as will into full harmony with God through the processes of restitution.

As we long for the glorious day let us prepare our hearts that we may be approved of the King—that we may be accepted even as his Bride through his mercy and grace. Let us not forget that there are conditions expressed by the Apostle in the words, "If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him." "If we be dead with him we shall also live with him"—"heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may also be glorified together." A little while and the trials shall be over; a little while and if faithful we shall have the crown and hear the blessed words, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joys of thy Lord. Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things."—Matt. 25:21, 23; Z. '06: 397, 398.

"She Hath Done What She Could"

The Feast was spread at Simon's house, and as they sat at meat,
A woman came and silent stood within the open door—
Close pressed against her throbbing heart an alabaster box
Of purest spikenard, costly, rare, she held. With modest fear,
She dreaded to attract the curious gaze of those within.
And yet her well-beloved Friend was there, her Master, Lord.
With wondrous intuition she divined that this might be
Her last, her only opportunity to show her love;
She thought of all that he had done for her, the holy hours
She spent enraptured at his feet, unmindful of all else,
If only she might hear those words of **Truth**, those words of **Life**.
She thought of that dark hour when Lazarus lay within the tomb
And how he turned her night to day, her weeping into joy.
Her fair face flushed, with deepening gratitude her pure eyes shone.
With swift, light step she crossed the crowded room. She bravely met
Those questioning eyes (for Love will find its way through paths where lions
Fear to tread); with trembling hands she broke the seal and poured
The precious contents of the box upon her Saviour's feet,
And all the house was filled with fragrance wonderful and sweet.
She could not speak, her heart's devotion was too deep, her tears
Fell softly, while she took her chiefest ornament, her long
And silken hair and wiped his sacred feet,—when suddenly
A rude voice broke the golden silence with, "What waste! this might
Have sold for much, to feed the poor!" She lower bent her head—
To her it seemed so mean a gift for love so great to make!
Again a voice re-echoed through the room, her blessed Lord's.
(He half arose and gently laid his hand upon her hair)—
And how it thrilled her fainting heart to hear him sweetly say,
"Rebuke her not, for she hath wrought a good work, what she could;
Aforehand, to anoint me for my burying she hath come,
And this her deed of love throughout the ages shall be told!"

* * *

How oft since first I read the story of this saint of old,
My own poor heart has burned with fervent, longing, deep desire,
That I might thus have ministered unto my Lord and King—
"The chiefest of ten thousand, altogether lovely One."
And now, to learn—Oh! precious thought, 'tis not too late, I still
May pour Love's priceless ointment on "the members" of his Feet!
Dear Lord, I pray, Oh! help me break with sacrificial hand
The seal of Self, and pour the pent-up odors of my heart
Upon thy "Feet!" Oh! let me spend my days and nights in toil,
That I, perchance, may save from needless wandering, and help
To keep them in the narrow way that leads to light and life.
Oh! let me lay within their trembling hands a rose of love,
A lily's pure and holy inspiration on their breast!
Dear Master, let me kneel with them in dark Gethsemane;
Oh! help me boldly stand and meekly bear the scoffs and jeers
Of cruel, mocking tongues! Oh! may I count no cost, e'en life
Itself, too great to serve, to bless, to comfort thy dear **"Feet,"**
And when the last drop of my heart's devotion has been shed,
Oh! may I hear thy sweet voice say, **"She hath done what she could!"—Z. '08: 205.**

Waiting Patiently on the Lord

1 Samuel 2:1-10; 5:1-10.

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"—Psa. 133:1.

"WE have need of patience," writes the Apostle. "In your patience possess ye your souls." instructs our Lord. "Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing," the Apostle explains. Very evidently patience, therefore, includes other graces of character—implies their possession to a certain extent. Amongst the Lord's people patience surely must be preceded by faith, and the degree of patience very generally measures the amount of the faith. The Christian who finds himself impatient and restless evidently is lacking in faith toward the Lord; for otherwise he would be able to rest in the Lord's gracious promises, and wait for their fulfilment. After using reasonable diligence and energy he should be content to leave the results and the times and seasons with the Lord.

Our lesson deals with David's attainment to the kingdom to which he was anointed, while a shepherd boy, by the Prophet Samuel. His patient trust in the Lord, and waiting for his time and way to give him the kingdom, are worthy of note, and constitute the most striking feature of this lesson. As a youth he exercised patience until the Lord's providence brought him the opportunity of meeting Goliath, and being advanced to the position of a captain in the army and made King Saul's son-in-law. Then came the check in his career, when for seven years he was treated as an outlaw by the king, and more or less so regarded by his fellow-countrymen. We have seen his patience under these trying circumstances, and noted his unwillingness to hasten the Lord's arrangements, in which he fully trusted, his unwillingness to raise his hand against the king, or to sanction his death at the hands of another. This lesson shows us that even after the death of Saul David still waited patiently on the Lord to give him, in his own way, the honors and powers promised.

For some time before Saul's death David and his six hundred followers had been living in the country of the Philistines, and been treated by them as allies; and when the Philistines went to war with Israel—to fight against King Saul, who had been the enemy of David and his companions—it would have appeared strange had the latter refused to join in the war. In the Lord's providence they were very graciously spared from either fighting against their brethren or seeming unappreciative of their hosts, the Philistines, by the decision of the latter that they would prefer not to have David and his company go with them. After the defeat of Saul and his army the Philistines took possession of a considerable portion of the land of Israel, and it became a question for David as to what should be his proper course—how would the Lord give to him the throne of Israel, as promised? That David's heart was loyal to the Lord, as the needle to the pole, is evidenced by the fact that he did not conclude for himself what his course should be, but made inquiry of the Lord. This was probably done through the medium of the High Priest, Abiathar. He got the Lord's answer and followed it to the letter, locating, with his companions and their families, at Hebron and the adjacent towns. David was of the tribe of Judah, and thus settling in a central city of that tribe, where he and his family were well known, he was safe amongst friends;—besides, the Philistines were his friends. It was not long before the people of his own tribe chose him for their king, and anointed him accordingly—thus falling into line with the Lord's choice and anointing, already expressed years before.

This was seemingly a good start toward the fulfilment of the Lord's promise of the Kingdom, but again the matter was deferred for another seven years, during which time David patiently saw Ishbosheth, Saul's surviving son, anointed to be king over one province after another of Israel, and, with his general, Abner, gaining victory after victory over the Philistines,—seemingly establishing himself firmly in the power of the kingdom which David had certainly supposed was to come to him at the death of Saul. The experiences of these seven years surely were as strong tests of David's faith and patience as any in his career. To a man of his courageous temperament and energy the disposition must have been to assert the dominance of Judah over the other tribes, and to have declared them to be in rebellion, and to have attempted their conquest in the name of the Lord, with the assertion that he was the Lord's choice, anointed by Samuel, etc.

David's course during this time shows forth distinctly the true character of the man. He trusted that the Lord, who had been with him as a boy, and had delivered him from the lion and the bear, and had used him as Israel's champion in the battle with Goliath, and had guided him thus far, would continue to guide and direct, if he would continue to be submissive, and to act only along the lines of the Lord's direction. The wisdom of this course is manifest from the narrative. David showed, not only in his dealings with the men of Jabesh Gilead, but on other occasions, that he entertained no animosity toward those who were Saul's friends, and the friends of his family. A man of smaller heart would have done very differently, but would not have been "a man after God's own heart." David's course was defensive. The tribe of Judah he knew was acting in accord with the divine programme, and hence, when Ishbosheth and his army attempted to coerce the people of Judah and compel them to recognize Ishbosheth, David and his supporters resisted this intrusion, though we have no evidence that David attempted to extend his authority over the other tribes—except as they might voluntarily choose to accept him as their king. This they finally did, at the end of seven and half years, and a grand coronation made him king over all Israel. His patient waiting for the Lord's time and the Lord's way evidently was very much better than any other course he could have pursued. The Lord's wisdom is always superior: though in the midst of their trials, his people, being unable to see the end from the beginning, may have too much confidence in their own schemes and methods and too little faith in the Lord.

The Lord's people of today should take well to heart this lesson of faith, obedience and patient waiting on the Lord. We, too, are waiting for a Kingdom, and for the peace and blessing which the Lord has promised shall come therewith. We, too, see Philistines in the way, and rival brethren, who, though really the Lord's, do not see so clearly as we the Lord's programme for the establishment of his Kingdom. It is for us to wait patiently on the Lord, while he uses the wrath of man to praise him, and to make straight the way of the Lord, and to usher in eventually his Kingdom under more favorable conditions than would be possible if we were to attempt to act for ourselves, or in any manner or sense to hasten his arrangements.

The Golden Text is an excellent one, and applied to this lesson we see it illustrated in David's course. Although he was a man of war, courageous and aggressive toward the enemies of the Lord and of Israel, David was most emphatically a man of peace toward his brethren of all the tribes;—careful to treat them as brethren, and to do all in his power to maintain unity and brotherly love and friendship. Although misunderstood and persecuted by them for a time, he finally was appreciated and proclaimed king of all Israel, with the result that all the brethren, thus united by his wise counsel and conduct, did dwell together in unity, and Israel had peace and prosperity, whereas by a different course on David's part a fierce and long-lasting civil war might readily have been enkindled.

We are reminded, too, of the fact that it was the Lord's own brethren who persecuted him, but that, as the Apostle explains, "in ignorance they did it." We rejoice to know that when the Lord shall have fully established his Kingdom, all who are the Lord's people, all desirous of being on the side of righteousness, will hail him gladly as their King; and that the unity and peace and blessing of that glorious Millennial age will far exceed anything that our minds can grasp or our tongues express. Like our Lord, let us seek to be peacemakers, and to dwell together with all the brethren in the unity of the Spirit, in the bonds of peace. Let our activities, our combativeness, etc., be engaged against the great enemy and all the works of sin,—including those in our members, our own fallen flesh. We, and all the brethren, will thus find sufficient engagement for every combative element of our nature, in ways well pleasing to the Lord, and employment for every lovable and helpful quality we possess, in building one another up, and doing good unto all men as we have opportunity, especially to the household of faith.—Z. '03: 361-363.

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The self-sacrificing spirit, blended with humility, should be recognized by all of the sheep as the spirit of the true Shepherd, and from such alone should be expected the leading which the Good Shepherd promised to the flock throughout this Gospel age. —Z. '05: 89.

◆

"A little while, our trials will be over;
A little while, our tears be wiped away;
A little while, the power of Jehovah
Shall turn all darkness into gladsome day.

"A little while! 'Tis ever drawing nearer—
The brighter dawning of that glorious day.
Blest Savior, make our spirit's vision clearer,
And guide, O guide us in the shining way."
—Z. '06: 259.

◆

All who lack faith lack proof that they are in the Body of Christ.—Z. '14: 26.

◆

Let us be of a good courage! There are various kinds of courage: One kind is born of egotism and self-reliance, another kind results from a spirit of recklessness, which fails to take a proper estimate of the difficulties to be encountered. But true courage, the courage which the Lord's Word enjoins upon His people, and which all Spiritual Israelites are to seek to possess, is a courage which, while carefully noting and realizing the trials and difficulties before them, and recognizing their own insufficiency, looks to the Lord in faith for the needed assistance, trusting in His precious promises. This enables them to be strong and courageous in the presence of difficulties, dangers and obstacles which would appal those who are trusting merely in their own strength.—Z. '14: 232.

◆

A hope that is based upon credulity merely has the word or opinion of another as to what the future holds. A hope that is based upon faith has the unimpeachable promise of the everlasting God that the things for which the Christian hopes are absolutely certain if he continues faithful unto the end.—Z. '17: 211.

◆

We are to consider the offer made to us—the great High calling—the most wonderful thing ever known in all creation!—Z. '13: 312.

◆

The Kingdom is designed only for those who by the grace of God shall in heart, in character, become like the Master, in that they will love the Lord with all their heart, with all their soul (all their present capacity), and be able to say: "Not My will, but Thine, O Lord, be done." No other heart condition than this of entire submission to God in Christ can make us acceptable for the Kingdom; for no other condition represents full loyalty and full love to God. Let us not forget that all the Heavenly glories and blessings, which "eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man," God has prepared only for them who love Him supremely —and who prove this love. But His grace will be sufficient for our every need.

"Then let us bid each doubt remove—
Those doubts that fain would rise—
And view the Canaan that we love
With unbeclouded eyes!
Could we but climb where Moses stood,
And view the landscape o'er,
Not Jordan's stream, nor death's cold flood,
Should fright us from the shore!"
—Z. '14:264.

◆

Our watching and praying may be, and should be, still more earnest than that of the disciples at the time of our Lord. And as they were then entering into a time of special temptation, so we in the end of this Age are living in a time of special trial regarding all that we have learned in the School of Christ as New Creatures, along the lines of meekness, gentleness, brotherly-kindness and love. If we be found short in these, so far as the heart is concerned, we would not be counted worthy to be of the Kingdom class, and therefore would be separated in some way from those who were found worthy.—Z. '13:279, 280.

◆

Although we are not always free to do as we may please, we are always free to will as we may please, and, in the present time the Lord is dealing with his people according to their wills.—Z. '03:70.

◆

The soldier of Christ is to endure whatever experiences may come to him, under the guidance of his Captain, not only willingly, but **gladly, rejoicing** that he has been permitted to enter this army of the Lord, knowing that these experiences are working out for him "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."—Z. '14:55.

◆

Where honesty of heart prevails amongst the Lord's people, schisms, divisions, should be unknown. The Lord's guidance and instruction should be sought—his Word through the Apostles. Moreover, the Lord has been pleased since the Apostles fell asleep to use faithful brethren in the Church as finger-boards to indicate the right path, in harmony with his Word through the Apostles and prophets. The thing necessary is the pure heart and the honest conscience and the humble spirit.

"We would be one in hatred of all wrong,
One in our love of all things sweet and fair;
One with the joy that breaketh into song,
One with the grief that trembles into prayer,
One in the power that makes Thy children free
To follow truth, and thus to follow Thee."
—Z. '09:117.

◆

Ye, brethren, who are still walking in the light, be faithful to the end. The things to come reveal a glorious reward for your faithfulness. In this our part of the battle of the great day, a thousand will fall at your side and ten thousand at your right hand (Psa. 91:7); but be not dismayed. Like Gideon's typical band, the victory is reserved to the faithful few. Glory not in numbers nor in worldly favor. The devices of error alone will prosper in that way. —Z. '92:25.

◆

Looking back with the eye of faith we can realize that the Lord is, as from the first, supervising his own work. But only in proportion as we know what the Lord's work is, can we have and use the eye of faith. We must see that the Divine programme is not to attempt the conversion of the world at the present time, but to leave that for the future, to be accomplished by Christ's Millennial Kingdom.—Z. '09:296.

◆

"THE LORD GOD IS A SUN AND SHIELD"

Our text is a great encouragement to the David class, the beloved class, the anointed ones, the members of Christ. To these the Lord God is both a sun and shield; he not only enlightens these but he will not suffer them to be injured by the blessings which he bestows upon them. He will shield them from all enemies and everything that would tend to injure them in any manner; all things shall work together for good to those that love him, to the called ones according to his purpose. (Rom. 8:28.) With such blessed assurances, then, we may look forward into the future with rejoicing and with confidence, trusting to have a share in the glorious rewards God has promised to the faithful. . . .

As each step of opposition on the part of Saul worked out a blessing for David, giving him wider experiences and fitting and preparing him for his future usefulness as the king, so all of the trials and difficulties and the disappointments that the Lord will now permit to come upon us from the world, the flesh and the Adversary—all of these will prove but preparations for his glorious Kingdom privileges, if faithfully used.—Z. '08:237.

◆

What a privilege we enjoy, not only of being comforted by the Lord through his Word, but of being used of him as channels for comforting or strengthening or upholding one another during this mourning time, when some, more than others, have in themselves weaknesses and frailties to cause mourning to themselves and to others. Blessed are those who, being comforted themselves, shall be used of the Lord in the comforting of the other members of his body.—Z. '06:72.

◆

Not only are we approaching or **coming nearer** every day to the heavenly Jerusalem, the Kingdom condition, but also **coming nearer** to our association with the holy angels, whose numbers are innumerable, whereas ours are limited—144,000. More than this, we are approaching, **coming near,** to the "general assembly of the Church" by participation in the "First Resurrection"—"His Resurrection" (Phil. 3:10), for we are "members of his Body." Additionally we are approaching God, the Judge of all; soon we shall be ushered into the presence of the great King Eternal. As the Apostle declares, our Lord, our Redeemer, having raised us from the dead to glory, honor and immortality, "will present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy." (Jude 24.) He is the Judge of all. —Z. '09:343.

◆

Every item of knowledge should be used as the foundation for soil in which further graces of the Spirit will be developed for the enrichment of the character of the New Creature.—Z. '11:68.

◆

If we knew in advance just how each trial of faith and love and devotion to principle and loyalty to the Lord and to the brethren would come we might be prepared to meet it, and correspondingly it would be less severe, and our humility, patience and love be correspondingly less tested. But the Lord wishes to test us along these very lines, and hence our trials usually come from unexpected quarters. This makes the trial more severe and proves the better the real sentiments of our hearts. The Lord desires to purge out of us everything in the nature of dross—self-will, personal ambition, pride: he wishes to cultivate in us loyalty to himself and the principles of righteousness, represented in his character, and exhorts us through his Word.—Z. '06:309.

◆

The chief light of each Age comes at its close. —Z. '14:154.

◆

This, we believe, is at the door. The Lord is about to take possession of the Church, which is the jewel class of the whole world.—Z. '15:37.

◆

"Be patient and submissive—strength is given
For every step along the weary way.
And for it all thou'lt render praise to Heaven,
When dreary night gives place to Perfect Day.

"Yes, Perfect Day, the day of God eternal,
When not a shadow shall flit o'er the scene
In that fair land where all is bright and vernal,
And we will be with Christ and naught between.

"Wait, then, dear heart; control thy sad emotion;
God will subdue each angry wind and wave;
And when the voyage ends across life's ocean
Within the haven of sweet rest will save."
—Z. '14:135.

◆

The difficulty which the New Creature encounters is the weakness of the flesh in which he must tabernacle for the present, and the danger of being misled, enticed away, from the things that are holy. Day by day he seeks to control the flesh and to bring it wholly into subjection.—Z. '15:228.

◆

Abraham had testified his faith in God's promises in a general way. He did not doubt them, but when the Lord reiterated the fact that the land was to be his, he thought it not improper to ask for some word indicating the way in which the blessing should come—"O, Lord God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it? What outward signs and evidences will help my faith to grasp these great promises you have made to me and which I thoroughly believe?" It was no more a sin for Abraham to ask the Lord to confirm and strengthen his faith than it would be for us to ask the same for ourselves. And God seems ever ready to help the trustful. How many assistances to faith he gives us without chiding when we come to him in a trustful and faithful attitude of mind. This is illustrated in our day by the difference in the Lord's treatment of those who look skeptically upon the Scriptures, the Bible, and those who look upon it from the standpoint of faith. The first mentioned find plenty to establish their skepticism. On the other hand, those who are looking at the Word from the standpoint of faith and trust are blessed; to them it is opened—"He that seeketh findeth."—Z. '07:58.

◆

It is for us to look for the Lord's providences in our affairs at this time, and to find them guiding us, sheltering us from the heat of persecution and tribulation and trial, and again at other times enlightening us, refreshing us in the dark seasons. And this leading of divine providence is intended to be ours so long as we are of the true Israel of God, until we pass over Jordan into heavenly Canaan and need such special providences no further. Blessed are those whose faith is awake and on the alert, and who discern the Lord's favors which the world will not discern, and which only those in the right attitude of mind can appreciate. O, Lord, help us more and more to appreciate thy leadings, thy providences, and to trust to thy wisdom in all of life's affairs, until thereby we shall be guided by thy Word and thy grace to the heavenly Canaan and its rest! —Z. '07:155, 156.

◆

Jesus said we should pray and not faint, not grow weary, not lose our interest in the things desired if they are the things that God has indicated to be in harmony with his will. If, for instance, we read in the Scriptures that the Lord is more pleased to give his holy Spirit to them that ask him than earthly parents are to give good gifts to their children, then it cannot be amiss for us to watch and pray with patience and continuance for this holy Spirit—that we might obtain this great blessing, the character-likeness of our Lord.—Z. '07:104.

◆

In order to be worthy of more light we must have the character which will follow the light as it is seen.—Z. '15:200.

◆

If those not so actively engaged in the service are faithfully doing all that their hands find to do, the Lord is as appreciative of it as He is of those who because of greater ability or physical strength or opportunities are able to accomplish more—each doing to the extent of his opportunity the work of the Lord.—Z. '15:120.

◆

We have confidence in the Lord and in His times and seasons; therefore we are very restful. God will bring order out of all the prevailing confusion. All who will prove worthy of everlasting life will ultimately be glad to work in the way the Lord shall direct.—Z. '15:164.

◆

The Lord knows how to sift and shake his professed Church so as to gather out of it all things that offend and they that do iniquity.—Z. '05:5.

A. Winto

Old Corn Gems

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Communion With Our Father

Oft when alone in prayer I kneel
  Before my Father's throne;
I cannot tell him all I feel,
  Nor make my wishes known.

With heart subdued, and head bowed low,
  I lean upon his breast,
And while the tears unbidden flow,
  My love for him confess.

I have no boon to ask of him,
  Save that his will be done,
To make me holy, pure within—
  An image of His Son.

But as he smiles and draws me near—
  His Spirit from above
Floods all my soul with peace so dear,
  And fills my heart with love.

Though from my gaze he hides his face,
  My soul, from self apart,
Has found its happy resting place
  Close to his loving heart.—Z. '09:361.

Heroism

It takes great strength to train
To modern service your ancestral brain;
To lift the weight of the unnumbered years
Of dead men's habits, methods, and ideas;
To hold that back with one hand, and support
With the other the weak steps of new resolve!
It takes great strength to bring your life up square
With your accepted thought, and hold it there,
Resisting the inertia that drags back
From new attempts to the old habit's track.
It is so easy to drift back—to sink—
So hard to live abreast of what you think!

It takes great strength to live where you belong
When other people think that you are wrong;
People you love, and who love you, and whose
Approval is a pleasure you would choose.
To bear this pressure, and succeed at length
In living your belief—well, it takes strength—
Courage, too. But what does courage mean
Save strength to help you face a pain foreseen;
Courage to undertake this life-long strain
Of setting yourself against your grandsire's brain;
Dangerous risk of walking alone and free,
Out of the easy paths that used to be;
And the fierce pain of hurting those we love
When love meets truth, and truth must ride above.
—Z. '09:215.

The deliberateness of Divine providence often astounds us. Our lives are so brief, our limitations so many, that any plans we may have must be pushed to completion as rapidly as we are able. But not so with the Almighty, who is "from everlasting to everlasting God." He has unlimited time at His disposal, and accordingly is working out His sovereign will with great deliberation. It is a comfort to His people to be assured that He knew the end from the beginning, and is working all things according to the counsel of His own will.—Z. '13:170.

◇

If the Lord would teach heavenly wisdom it must imply just such lessons as would win our hearts from temporalities and place them more and more upon the riches of his grace, the heavenly wisdom; if the Lord would teach patience it must be by showing us our own lack of this quality and permitting us to pass through trials and difficulties in which he is pleased to place us, and assist us in overcoming and gaining patience.—Z. '05:28.

◇

All who would be in full accord with the Lord and have his fullest blessing must be faithful to his message and stand firm and loyal to him at any cost. To such and such alone the message of the Lord is now going forth, proving a glorious blessing and uplift, bringing them nearer to the Lord and into closer fellowship with those who are truly his and most completely under the blessings and provisions which he has made for his faithful.—Z. '05:335.

◇

We need each member of the Body, as the Apostle intimates, and as the trying times before us become more strenuous we all more and more need the actual co-operation and assistance and sympathy and love of each other.—Z. '08:294.

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Truth is only meat in season when we are prepared to receive it. A child is not prepared to solve a mathematical problem until he has first been instructed in the use of figures and of language. So also with divine truth: it is built up step by step, and to gain an understanding of it we must ascend by the steps provided.—B. 14.

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OLD CORN GEMS

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"And they did eat of the OLD CORN of the land on the morrow after the Passover . . . and the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the OLD CORN of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year." Joshua 5:11-12.

A SAFE RULE

"WHERE A BROTHER GIVES AN INTERPRETATION OF A SCRIPTURE WHICH DIFFERS FROM THAT GIVEN BY BROTHER RUSSELL, AND BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION SEEMS REASONABLE AND IN HARMONY WITH THE PLAN OF GOD, THEN WE BELIEVE IT A SAFE RULE TO FOLLOW BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION, FOR THE REASON THAT HE IS THE SERVANT OF THE CHURCH, SO CONSTITUTED BY THE LORD FOR THE LAODICEAN PERIOD; AND THEREFORE WE SHOULD EXPECT THE LORD TO TEACH US THROUGH HIM. WHERE THERE ARISES A DOUBT IN THE MIND AS TO WHICH INTERPRETATION IS CORRECT, THEN IT IS ALWAYS SAFER TO RESOLVE THAT DOUBT IN FAVOR OF BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION. WE BELIEVE SUCH TO BE IN HARMONY WITH THE LORD'S WILL." Z. '18:51.

The Labor of Love to be Rewarded

"God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love which ye have showed toward His name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister."—Hebrews 6:10.

DISCOURAGEMENT is a hindrance to growth in grace; St. Paul was seeking to encourage his readers. The context implies that they had experienced some setback, some discouragement. He intimates that while they had begun well, their zeal had cooled to some extent. In this chapter and on to the tenth inclusive, he points out the danger of falling back and away after we have become Christians. And to those who are likely to become discouraged he gives the exhortation of our text. "God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love." We might inquire, What great work, or labor of love, could they do that would constitute it unrighteous for God to forget to reward it? Are not good works the proper course for all mankind? How would it be unrighteous for God to forget these good works?

The answer of Scripture would seem to be that the world cannot do any good works that God could acknowledge—"There is none righteous, no, not one." But "God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love," writes the Apostle. What does he mean? We reply, He is addressing Christians, those who have become God's children by entering into a covenant with Him. They were children of wrath, even as others; and still, according to the flesh, they are imperfect. But God is not dealing with these according to the flesh. He has received them into His family under a special arrangement, a Covenant of Sacrifice. In that Covenant He agreed that through Christ He would make allowance for their weaknesses, and deal with them according to the intentions of their hearts and minds, according as they would seek to please Him as His children. God has thus bound Himself of His own free will by entering into a Covenant with His people. He is bound to them, on the one side, and they are bound to Him, on the other side. Neither can escape the conditions of that Covenant.

Danger of Losing the Reward

These Covenanters were members of Adam's fallen race, condemned to death. Ah, yes! but this is the race for whom Christ died, and who will be recovered from death and from the condemnation of sin that came through Adam's disobedience. And this merit of Christ's death was applied first for a choice class who during the Gospel Age should long after God and gladly accept His arrangement through Christ. This being so, when these heard of Christ as the Redeemer, they believed on Him, they sacrificed their earthly hopes, aims, ambitions—all—in order that they might enter into this Covenant with the Lord. The thought which inspired them to take this step was the hope that they might attain to the spiritual inheritance, to be joint-inheritors with Christ in the Kingdom to be set up on the earth. This was something to which God had opened up the way, through His provision in Christ. They gave up the earthly things for the grander, the Heavenly. They voluntarily sacrificed all earthly rights and interests. They bound themselves irrevocably to the Lord.

Now if they should make a failure in this matter, they would lose absolutely everything. The Apostle is pointing out this fact. They have acknowledged God's arrangement, and there is a great reward coming to them under their Covenant with Him. Do not, he urges, forfeit this reward by turning away from the Lord and becoming cold or lukewarm, which condition might lead on to entire rejection of God. Rather go on, and be of good courage; and the Lord, Jehovah Himself, shall strengthen your hearts; wait expectantly on Him.

In the 10th Chapter, the Apostle tells them of how some of them had in the past endured a great fight of afflictions, and of how others had suffered with those in affliction in that they had been sympathizers and companions of those who had been so persecuted. All this was endured for the Lord's sake, for love of the brethren, and in harmony with God's arrangement. Therefore they should have confidence in God, that He loved them and appreciated all they had borne for Him. The Apostle exhorts them again not to turn back, not to be discouraged, but to be encouraged; and again he assures them of his confidence that they would persevere to the end.

The Blessedness of Ministering to the Saints

St. Paul declares that their labors of love were shown toward God's name. This honor toward God's name consisted in their ministering to the saints. This was a proof of their love for the Lord. This ministry, too, had been kept up. The saints represent God in the world. Whatever is done for the saints is, therefore, done for God. There is a distinction to be noted in the Bible as respects those who are in covenant relationship with God and those who are not in covenant relationship with Him. We have certain duties toward the world. We have responsibilities toward them. The Golden Rule is to operate always and toward all men. But we have not the same obligation toward the world that we have toward the saints. Whoever honors the saints and serves them, honors and serves God. This seems to be the Apostle's thought in the matter.

We are not to understand that the Lord would be displeased that we should do good to all men. Rather the Apostle urges, "Let us do good unto all men as we have opportunity." Be generous, be kind to everybody, but especially to the saints. (Galatians 6:10.) This is what is particularly pleasing to God. Every service lovingly and gladly rendered to the saints is rendered unto His glory. This is true in a very special sense; for there are people in the world who might be naturally more admirable in character, and it might be more pleasing to serve them than to serve many of the saints, who might be ruder, cruder, in some respects. But in the service to the saints there is a special blessing from the Lord. We are to have this in mind when meeting and fellowshiping with those who have become children of God, and when we have opportunities to assist or comfort them. They must have our love, our co-operation, our sympathy, our aid. There may be more or less option in respect to others, but not in respect to our brethren in Christ.

This same principle, to some extent, holds good amongst worldly people. For instance, an Odd Fellow would show favors toward an Odd Fellow, whether rich or poor, learned or unlearned, that he would not show to others. And the same with Masons. A Mason would show favor to a Mason the world over, whether he be rich or poor, black or white. If these are the human standards, much more so should it be thus with those who have become children of the Lord. The fact that they are disciples of Christ makes it incumbent on whoever is a follower of the same Master to do a brother's or a sister's part. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, ye have done it unto Me." This does not apply now to the world, but it does apply to the Church, the Lord's faithful followers.

Perseverance in This Ministry

The Apostle says, "In that ye have ministered unto the saints, and do minister." This signifies that they were still in this proper attitude. Although somewhat discouraged in the good way, they were still helpful to one another. Another thought—it was not merely the amount of good works that they did that counted; for many good works are done by many people which would not in any sense be recognized by God or be bound to be rewarded. The works of the world are works of sinners. The world are not in covenant relationship with God. If any one does a good work, he by an unwritten law gets more or less blessing out of it. Whoever does a good work with a worthy motive will receive some reward, some blessing. It will ennoble his character and help to fit him for the blessings of the next Age, when all the world will be on trial for life before the Judgment Seat of God. The nobler the character in that Day, the fewer corrective stripes will be necessary. But in order to get the present blessing of the Lord, His special blessing, he must be in covenant relationship with Him.

The work now being done by those in such relationship with God will be worthy of His notice and reward. In the 13th Chapter of 1st Corinthians, the apostle points out that, with the Body of Christ good works alone are not sufficient to indicate God's favor. He declared that if he should give his body to be burned, and should give all his goods to feed the poor, there would be no real merit in it unless it was done from the motive of love. "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal," was his further declaration. One might do these good works to have the honor of men. If they were done for any such reason, God would not consider them good works to be rewarded. The works that God recognizes as good works and worthy of His approval and reward are those done by His faithful people, who are justified and sanctified, and who serve from love to Him, to His people and to His cause.

And so St. Paul says here to these, "God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love." This is important to have in mind. It is important for us to see to it that our motives are those of love toward the Lord and His Cause and His brethren. Such good works, if persevered in according to our ability and opportunity, will not fail of a blessed reward.—Z. '15: 380-382.

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From our favored vantage ground we, still more than Job, can take in perfect submission whatever experiences God in His wisdom and love sees fit to allow to come upon us. If we are His children, we are bound to accept all our experiences as being of His providence and order and arrangement.

"Naught that I have my own I call,
I hold it for the Giver;
My heart, my strength, my life, my all
Are His and His forever."—Z. '14: 77.

The Kingdom a Prize

Matthew 13: 44-53.

Text:—"Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."—Matt. 6:33.

TODAY WE HAVE precious lessons from the Great Teacher respecting His Kingdom. The parable of the "Treasure hid in the Field," and the parable of the "Pearl of Great Price," both picture to us the great value of the Kingdom of Glory which is ultimately to be established amongst men for the blessing of the world. These parables also furnish lessons of what it will cost to secure a share, a place in that Kingdom. A third parable of the lesson treats of the embryo Kingdom: that is to say, the Parable of the "Net Cast into the Sea," pictures the condition of the (Gospel) Age, during which the Elect, or Kingdom class, the Bride, is being found and gathered by the Lord's providences.

"Treasure Hid in the Field"

This is not one of the parables which Jesus expounded. His people, therefore, are left to exercise their judgment of its meaning, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the light shed upon it by other Scriptures. Indeed, there might be more than one application of it correct. For instance, we might apply the parable to our Lord Jesus and say that He bought the whole world at the cost of all He had, and that He purchased the world because of the "treasure" which it contained. And that treasure might consist of a variety of treasures of different values—for instance, the Church, the Bride class, the Lord's special "treasure," and such of the world as will ultimately receive and be blessed by the Messianic Kingdom.

But our pr[illegible]nce of thought is that the Great Teacher referred, not to Himself at all, but to those whom He instructed. By virtue of His own covenant of sacrifice, the Kingdom was already promised to Him, and He, in turn, in the Father's name, was inviting those who had the ears to hear, and heart to appreciate, to become members of His Bride class—members of His Kingdom class.

He recommends that these should view the Kingdom after the illustration of this parable. Suppose in their journeying they saw a field for sale at a certain price, and suppose, upon examination of it, they found it to contain a great treasure. The treasure might consist of very excellent soil, especially suited to their purpose, or it might consist of a valuable vein of precious metal, or it might consist of money buried long centuries ago and forgotten, and not belonging to the owner of the field more than to others who might find it. In such a case, the parable suggests, any one of ordinary intelligence would be willing to invest everything that he possessed to acquire the title.

So the Master declared to those who heard Him then, and to us who receive His words now, that He has information to give respecting a Great Treasure, a Priceless Treasure, which can be obtained, but only by the expenditure of great energy and the investment of everything of value. The Great Treasure is the share in the Messianic Kingdom—that by accepting the terms of discipleship we may become not only sons of God, but, if children, then heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord to His heavenly inheritance. This inheritance was the same as was promised to the Seed of Abraham, and we acquired an interest or share in it, not by being the actual seed of Abraham and the actual heirs to the Kingdom, but by becoming Messiah's Bride and Joint-heir.

When we think how much time and energy are put forth, and how much money and influence are expended to obtain some little, petty earthly honor of worldly renown and glory, and when we reflect that these at most will last but a few years and be unsatisfactory at best, then we can appreciate the better the glory, honor and immortality which God has in reservation for the "called and chosen and faithful," the Bride, the Lamb's Wife.

A Pearl of Great Value

In the days of our Saviour pearls were represented amongst the most precious and most desirable of jewels, and the larger and more nearly perfect the pearl the greater its value. The Great Teacher used this familiar matter as the basis for a lesson on the value of the Kingdom. The Merchant of the Parable found a Pearl so superior in every respect to all other pearls that he considered it cheap to give everything that he possessed to become the owner of that Pearl.

This, said the Master, illustrates the value of the Kingdom, with its glory, honor and immortality, which I am inviting an elect, saintly little flock to share with Me. Those who prize it properly will show their appreciation by the amount they will be willing and glad to pay for it. Whether a man be wealthy or poor, learned or ignorant, influential or otherwise, the cost of this Kingdom Pearl of great value will be—his all. It cannot be had for less.

The wealthiest or most talented person in the world could not obtain a share in that Kingdom if he kept back one single atom of his possessions: the price of the Kingdom is self-sacrifice, even unto death, and nothing less will secure it. Nor would any sacrifice that we could make secure a share in this Kingdom for us, except as our sacrifice would first be made acceptable in God's sight through the precious merit of our Redeemer's sacrifice, which He finished at Calvary.

The Parable of a Fish Net

We are not to think of the Kingdom as like a net, but to understand that the embryo Kingdom resembles a fishing experience with a net, in which were gathered all kinds of fish, which were brought to shore and sorted. This is a parable of the embryo Kingdom because it relates to a work done in this Age, in connection with the finding of the "little flock" who will constitute the Kingdom in glory. The Lord during the (Gospel) Age has not been fishing for all kinds of fish; He has not been seeking for all kinds of people. He has been calling, drawing especially, and dealing with, only the elect, only the saintly.

Incidentally, a variety of other kinds of fish have gotten into the Gospel Net. . . . But the suitable fish, which the Lord is seeking, and who alone will constitute the Kingdom class, are those who hear His Message with joy and count the cost and appreciate the situation and desire to be "bond servants of the Lord Jesus Christ." They are willing to suffer with Him now that they may be glorified together with Him in His Kingdom.

The parable tells us that "when the net was full it was drawn ashore" and the fish sorted. This evidently signifies that there will come a time in the end of this Age when the Lord will have gathered a sufficient number of saintly ones to serve His purpose—to complete the number foreordained by the Father to be members of the elect Church in glory. Then the fishing will cease. Who can say that the opportunity for entering the "net" as one of the true "fish" of the kind the Lord is seeking may not (now, 1912) be almost at an end? Who can say that the Gospel Net, with its full assortment of churchianity of every style, will not soon be drawn ashore that the suitable, the elect, may be gathered into the Kingdom?

The unsuitable "fish" of this parable correspond with the "tares" of the parable. The "furnace of fire" will be the same "time of trouble" which will come upon the whole world of mankind very shortly. The unsuitable fish in the net are all church members—the unprofessing world are not represented in the parable at all.

Jesus asked His disciples if they understood the parable. They answered, Yes, and He told them to consider His parables as a householder would consider his reserve of food supplies, from which from time to time truths "both new and old" would be brought.

Our text emphasizes this study. If the Kingdom is the Pearl, and the Treasure, which the Master indicated— if we believe His testimony, then by all means let us show our faith, not merely by professions, but in every act and word. Let us seek the Kingdom as the pre-eminent matter of our lives, in comparison with which all other things are inferior, and, as St. Paul declared, "not worthy to be compared." If seeking the Kingdom seems to hinder some of our earthly prospects, so much the better. The Master said it must cost us our **all**. Our earthly considerations we have left in His hands. Let Him apportion our earthly blessings according to His wisdom of what will be most helpful to us in making our "calling and election sure" to a place in the Kingdom.—Z. '12: 200, 201.

The Humble to be Exalted

Philippians 2:1-11.

"For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might become rich."—2 Corinthians 8:9.

ST. PAUL, then a prisoner in Rome, wrote these words of our lesson to the Philippian brethren, whom he so dearly loved and from whom he had received so many proofs of their love for him. No other Church is mentioned as having aided St. Paul in his times of need. Their special assistance to him is mentioned—twice in Thessalonica (Philippians 4:16), and once in Corinth (2 Corinthians 11:9), and now at Rome.

The Epistle to the Philippians has been styled an epistle of joy—so richly did the Apostle's heart seem to respond to the faithfulness of the brethren there. He would have them know that he appreciated their love, and that such love should abound toward each other and toward all. His joy would be filled full in proportion as he could realize that the brethren had the proper mind of Christ, its love and harmony. He exhorted, therefore, that they remember the conditions on which such character could be developed. Nothing should be done by them through strife or for vain-glory. All of their conduct should be marked by lowliness, humility and willingness to discern the good qualities of others—noting wherein others were superior to themselves.

This would not mean that they should deceive themselves, but that they should be on the alert to appreciate true quality and character wherever found—looking for noble qualities in others, and generously hoping that they existed even when not discerned—considering the interests of the Lord's cause, and ignoring self-will or pride. Therefore they should not look merely at their own things or interests, but also upon those of others—the rights of others, the ability of others. This, the Apostle assures us, is a mark of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of a sound mind, which comes to the followers of Jesus as they grow in grace and the Master's character-likeness.

This mind, or disposition, the Apostle declares, was fully exemplified in Jesus. In His pre-human condition, when in the form of God, a spirit being, Jesus was humble. He did not meditate usurpation of Divine authority to exalt Himself, to seek a name higher than His own, as Satan did. He had no thought of robbing the Divine glory and honor by putting Himself upon an equality with God the Father. On the contrary, He had the same spirit that He had afterwards, when He declared, "Not My will, but Thine, be done"; and again, "I came not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me"; and again, "My Father is greater than all."—Luke 22:42; John 6:38; 10:29; 14:28.

The Master always had this disposition of reverence for the Father and of full trust and confidence in the Divine Wisdom, Love, Justice and Power, Hence, when the time came that the Father had purposed—when He would send a Savior into the world, first to redeem it and later on to become its King and Deliverer—and the proposal to render this great service to God and to men was proffered to the great Logos—"the Only Begotten of the Father"—it was promptly accepted. "I delight to do Thy will, O My God!" was the response of the chiefest of all God's creatures. This involved a great humiliation—leaving the dignity of the chiefest on the spirit plane, to become a human being—a man amongst men—"the Man Christ Jesus"—not a sinful man, but a perfect one, in the image and likeness of God, as was the first Adam originally—"holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners."

"The Man Christ Jesus"

After Jesus by the change of nature found Himself a man amongst men, He still preserved the same loyalty to the Father. He was only a child when we hear Him say, "Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?" (Luke 2:49.) Having learned that He could not attend to the Father's business until He reached the age stipulated in the Sinaitic Law, He remained quietly at home until nearly thirty. Then promptly He went forth to John the Baptist at Jordan; and by a public immersion He testified His full obedience to the Father's will—the full consecration of His life, even unto death.

Then there came upon Him a begetting of the Holy Spirit, as testified by John. Then, too, God granted that spirit-begotten One a special mental illumination; as we read, "The heavens [the higher things] were opened unto Him." The Divine Plan was made plain which involved His own death as the Antitype of the serpent raised on the pole by Moses, as the Antitype of the bullock of sin-offering slain by Aaron, as the Antitype of the Passover lamb slain by the Israelites and eaten by them for their strengthening and deliverance from Egypt—delivering the people of God from Satan's yoke of bondage to sin.

In all these experiences, we find that the Master was faithful, loyal to God, loyal to His covenant, loyal to the principles of righteousness. Thus it is written of Him, "Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore God, even Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows." (Psalm 45:7.) The oil of gladness represented the holy joy of our Lord and the holy prospects which sustained Him during this period when He made Himself of no reputation, and became poor indeed—finally losing even His life—all in loyalty to God's will and the Programme marked out in the Bible.

His final cry on Calvary was, "It is finished!" His baptism into death was finished—His full approval for obedience to God and the principles of righteousness, all that the Father had given Him to do in the way of sacrifice, had been accomplished. Ah, then it was God's turn to act! Would He leave His faithful One in death? Nay, "faithful is He who promised," who performed His good promises to His faithful Son.

The Apostle tells of this, saying, "Him hath God highly exalted, and given Him a name which is above every name"—a title and honor, a distinction, a place above all others. (Verses 9-11.) He was received into glory; and all the angels of God worshiped Him whom the Father had thus exalted to His own right hand, giving Him, additionally to what He had resigned, glory and immortality—the Divine nature. Well can we understand the acclaim of the Heavenly ones: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, riches, wisdom, strength, honor, glory and blessing."—Revelation5:12.

Messiah's Glorious Kingdom

But there is more glory yet to come to the great Redeemer. Those who crucified Him, yea, all the world of mankind, for whom He tasted death, are yet to be made aware of His great sacrifice on their behalf and of the great honor and high exaltation which came to Him as a result. He is to be the world's King of Glory and is to reign for a thousand years. As Verse 10 declares, eventually every knee on earth will bow, and every tongue will acknowledge Him; and all others not willing thus to recognize and obey Him are to be destroyed from amongst the people as "natural brute beasts." (2 Peter 2:12; Jude 10.) "And it shall come to pass, that every soul which will not hear that Prophet shall be destroyed from among the people." (Acts 3:23.) And all this glorifying of the Son will directly be to the Father's glory; for the entire Plan of Salvation is of the Father and through the Son, as the Apostle assures us.—1 Corinthians 8:6.

Now then, let us not lose the point of the Apostle's lesson expressed in our Golden Text. While the world by and by is to profit by the Redeemer's great sacrifice and subsequent Kingdom, and all are to have the opportunity of being restored to human perfection and a world-wide Kingdom, a special blessing of God is for the Church, who now accept the Redeemer, consecrate their lives, as He did His, to the Father's will, and walk in the footsteps of Jesus. They shall become His joint-heirs in the Kingdom, and reign with Him a thousand years—yea, and beyond.

The essence of this lesson is elsewhere expressed by the Apostle Peter. "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time." (1 Peter 5:6.) Only the humble-minded are prepared to learn the great lessons which must be learned before they will be ready for exaltation that would be profitable to themselves or to others. The course of selfishness and self-seeking is illustrated in Satan, who has failed and is ultimately to be destroyed. The same self-seeking spirit is styled the spirit of the world; and it is about to lead the world to the great catastrophe foretold in the Bible—from which, however, they will be rescued by Messiah and His Kingdom, and will have the opportunity of learning the great lesson of humility and obedience and of getting the reward.

Jesus, on the contrary, has illustrated to us the proper course which leads to glory, honor and immortality; namely, the course of full self-abasement and of full submission to whatever may be the Divine will. As the Savior has entered into His glory as a reward for His obedience, so the faithful of His people, the Church, demonstrating their humility and obedience, will be sharers, His joint-heirs in His future Kingdom of glory.—Z. '16:40, 41.

The Work for a Converted Will

"The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness. He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city."—Prov. 16:31, 32.

TO BESIEGE and capture a city is a great undertaking, because every city has its massive defences of law and force, and is built with all the probable contingencies of attacks from enemies in view. In olden times the defenses were walls and gates, but now they are of the improved order of governmental arrangements. Cities and communities of immense proportions are now banded together into great nations for mutual cooperation and defense, so that to attack a city now is to attack a nation, and to be withstood with all the defensive armory of the nation; and in no instance can one undertake it single-handed and alone. He who would undertake it must be backed by other powers equal, or at least apparently equal, to the emergency. And the victory of such a general will depend on his superior skill and ingenuity in utilizing the various forces and advantages in his possession against those employed by the defenders of the city.

Such ability as is thus required in a great general is quite rare. It indicates indomitable purpose, methodical planning and skill in execution, though these good qualities are often exercised in a bad cause. Such ability has always been highly esteemed among men, and the aspirants for fame have, therefore, in times past, sought it chiefly along this line, though they gained their laurels at the expense of the blood and groans of millions of their fellow-men.

While the exercise of these successful qualities along the lines of human ambitions is required of earthly heroes, the exercise of similar qualities along the lines of God's appointment is required of those who would be heroes in his estimation. If there were not a similarity in kind of the effort and success the comparison would not be instituted. Let us first notice the similarity, and then the difference, that we may see clearly what the Lord here commends.

To rule one's spirit (mind, disposition) implies a conflict similar to that of taking a city; for, no matter when we begin, we find entrenched therein many armed and opposing powers. They have possession by heredity—they are there as the result of the fall. And, if we have passed the days of youth, they are the more entrenched, and it requires the greater skill and generalship to rout them. But, whether we begin early or late, he that would rule his own spirit must war a good warfare—he must "fight the good fight" of faith down to the very end of the present existence. If a man would rule his own spirit, he must not only storm all the fortresses of inherited evils which seem to be almost a part of his nature, but, having gained possession and taken his seat upon the throne of this symbolic city (viz., the will), he must thereafter be continually on the defensive; for the old enemies are constantly on the alert, and ever and anon seeking to regain possession, so that he that continues to rule his own spirit is one who not only has routed the enemy, Sin, from the throne of his being, but who continues to keep him at bay.

To rule one's own spirit is by no means an easy task; and, as in the illustration, it cannot be done single-handed and alone. Consequently, the wise general will invoke all the assistance at his command, remembering the words of the Apostle—"We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the powers of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." These powers of the world, the flesh, and the devil are all closely allied; and, therefore, he who plans for conquest and an established reign thereafter must seek alliance with another and a stronger power; which power is tendered to all who earnestly undertake the great work. This power is none other than the almighty arm of our God, who says to all who accept his strength, "Greater is he that is for you than all they that be against you;" gird yourselves like men, fear not, be strong.

The ruling of this symbolic city—one's own spirit—never will be done until first the commanding general, the Will, has decided to change his allegiance from Sin to God, and to rout the rebels who resist the change. But, in the words of a trite saying, "Where there is a will there's a way"—for good or for evil. God will assist, through various agencies, toward good; Satan, with various agencies, toward evil. If the Will says, It must be done, it calls in the needed and available help, and forthwith it sets all the other faculties of the mind at work, first to subjugate and then to rule and regulate the entire being. The Conscience is commanded to keep a vigilant watch over all the mental operations; and the Judgment, under the influence of the Conscience, must decide as to righteousness or unrighteousness and report to the Will, which is under the same moral influence. Thus we have the three departments of government established—the legislative, which should always be the Conscience; the judicial, the Judgment; and the executive, the Will. And in every well-regulated or righteously ruled mind all the other faculties must make their appeal to this Congress, and that, as the Will insists, in due and proper order. Their appeal to the Will to execute their desires before submitting them first to Conscience and then to Judgment should never be tolerated; but, when approved there, they may freely urge their claims upon the executive power, the Will. But the Will governs; and, if it be weak, the government is slack, and the appetites and passions and unholy ambitions of the whole man take advantage of the situation: they seek to overbalance Judgment and to silence Conscience; and loudly clamor to the Will to have their own wild way. If the Will be weak, yet striving to keep under the influence of Conscience and sound Judgment, it will be fitful and irregular in its rulings, and the government will be unstable and ultimately wholly at the mercy of the appetites, passions and ambitions. The condition of such a soul is one of anarchy, which, unless its wild course be speedily arrested, hurriedly sweeps the whole being toward destruction.

It is all-important, therefore, that the Will be consecrated to God and righteousness; and, secondly, that it strengthen itself in the Lord, and in his name and strength rule with a firm hand, cultivating as its assistants Conscience and Judgment, in determining the good and acceptable and perfect will of God, as expressed in his Word.

The Will has the most difficult office to fill; and the Lord's commendation is to the man of resolute Will, under the influence of a divinely-enlightened Conscience and Judgment. Blessed is the man who sets his house in order, and who maintains that order to the end of his days. Truly, to such a one the hoary head is a crown of glory. The warring elements of his nature having been brought into subjection, the arts of peace have been cultivated, and now they flourish and adorn his character; and as Mr. Whittier beautifully expressed it—

"All the jarring notes of life
Seem blending in a psalm;
And all the angles of the strife,
Now rounding into calm."

—Z. '05:278, 279.

"Let Your Light So Shine"

"Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in faith, in purity."—1 Timothy 4:12.

WE RECALL that St. Paul was the writer of these words, that they constitute a part of his first Epistle to Timothy, a promising young Elder in the Church, one who had labored much with the Apostle in his work of the ministry. On one occasion Timothy was referred to by the Apostle as "my son Timothy." This was due no doubt to the fact that it was through St. Paul's instrumentality that the Truth had reached Timothy. On account of his youth he may not have realized his responsibility. He might have felt that many others in the Church were older than himself and would therefore be better examples to the brethren and better representatives of the Lord before men.

But the Apostle here exhorts Timothy to be an example of what a true believer should be. He urged him to "flee youthful lusts," to "stir up the gift of God" which was in him. Timothy was to make a special use of the talents and opportunities which were his. And in so doing he would be a worthy example—not only to believers, but of believers, so that not only might the Church see his life and general course, but others, those of the world, might also see this, and thus have greater interest in the Lord's Cause.

This example was not to be the wearing of a particular shape of coat or a particular cut of collar, nor was it in manifesting to the world eccentricities of life and manner—not so. His example was to be in his Christlike character. He was to glorify the Lord in his words—in what he would say, in how he would say it—in wisdom of speech. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Whoever would be careless in his language would reveal a careless heart. If Timothy had been careless in his words, others might have said, "You see that he thinks that he knows everything. See how he is always intruding himself." This would be especially unbecoming in one who was young. Thus he would have been despised as an example of believers, and others would be offended rather than helped.

Not only in word, but in his entire conversation was he to be an example. The word conversation, at the time our common version was translated, had the significance of conduct, manner of life. This advice is the counsel of wisdom in reference to us all as children of the Lord! The Apostle admonished Timothy with regard to his intercourse with the Church and with the world—Whether you eat or drink, whether you buy or sell, whatever you do, be a worthy exponent of the doctrine of Christ and of the effect of His Spirit in the heart.

In his charity, his love, Timothy was to be an example. This would include the ordinary thought of the word as now generally used, in the sense of dispensing largess. We do not know that Timothy had very much of this world's goods to distribute; but he could have charity in the sense of love, which is the comprehensive sense, the Bible sense, of the word. Love would not wish any harm to his neighbor, but would manifest interest in everybody, and even in the brute creation—wishing to do right, to be kind.

Love would serve the interests of others in spirit; it would come from the heart, from the inward disposition, not be merely in word or in outward conduct. Kindness and good-will would not be feigned from a sense of duty or to appear polite and thoughtful. It would be genuine. The spirit in which a thing is said or done has a great deal to do with its effect upon others. One who had wounded another might say, "There was not a word in what I said to which you could object." Ah, well! but it was the spirit in which it was said or done—the animus of it. This is an important matter to all the Lord's people. We are to remember the spirit of the Master—the spirit of consideration, of self-sacrifice, of righteousness, of love.

In faith, also, Timothy was to be an example to all with whom he came in contact. Of course the Apostle would mean here his manifestation of faith. One must have faith before he can manifest it. We have known Christians who, if they have a doubt about a certain feature of Truth or a weakness of faith, would discuss their doubts in the presence of those who were weak in the faith or who were of the world. This is a great mistake and productive of much harm. One never knows when a weak one may be present who might be greatly injured by words of doubt or distrust. Whoever is troubled by such doubts should go promptly to the Lord for help. that his faith may be firmly established; he should not discuss his doubts and fears with others unless as mentioned above, with the One who alone can help him. The Lord's people should not boast of how much faith they have—not so—but we should manifest our faith to others, our confidence in the Lord, by our peace under trial and difficulty. We should not merely say that we have faith, but should manifest it in our lives.

Timothy was counseled to be an example in purity. "Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord." (Isaiah 52:11.) As the typical priests and Levites were instructed to wash and keep themselves continually clean, so the people of the Lord today, the spiritual Priests, the spiritual Levites, should be pure, clean, in word, in action, in thought. Whoever is not pure in his thoughts is very apt to be impure, unclean, in his actions, his words. Out of the heart proceeds the impurity. One person of impure mind might poison the minds of many.

Impurity may be given a broad or a narrow view, as circumstances may indicate. In the broad sense, it would be uncleanness, dishonesty, insincerity, in general. But in every sense St. Paul would have Timothy be a worthy example, so that all who took note of him would see how they ought to deport themselves. The Apostle expressed the same desire concerning Timothy that he expressed concerning all the Church—that he walk as the Apostle himself walked, that he be as self-sacrificing as he saw St. Paul to be. This was not a Pharisaical attitude—I am holier than thou. But the Apostle demonstrated those principles of righteousness in the life that he lived, and he wished that Timothy should do the same.

Those qualities of character here enumerated by the Apostle should be shown forth—not merely by the Elders and the teachers of the Ecclesia, but by all who have made the same profession of being disciples of Christ. So far as our standing with God is concerned, we are all brethren one of another; and each of these brethren should seek to copy the Elder Brother, our Lord Jesus. Each one should seek to be a pattern to the whole flock of God.—Z. '16:61, 62.

"The Greatest of These is Love"

I. Cor. 13:1-13.

Golden Text:—"And now abideth faith, hope, charity (love) these three; but the greatest of these is charity"—love.—1 Cor. 13:13.

THE Church at Corinth had been founded for nearly five years and had enjoyed a wide range of experiences and Divine providences. St. Paul, in addressing them this epistle, was evidently considering well their needs and seeking to minister to the same the Divine message of grace and truth. The Apostle may not have realized how great a work he was doing and how far-reaching would be the scope of his instructions. Perhaps it was better for himself that he did not know how important was his service to the entire Church of the Gospel Age, as the mouthpiece of his Lord. Such a knowledge might have been too much for him and might have made him heady, the very condition of things the Lord was warding off by permitting him to still have the "thorn in the flesh."

The Apostle had been discussing God's "gifts" to the early Church, which, to them, took the place of other blessings now enjoyed. They had no Bibles, as we have; no concordances or helps in Bible study. They needed the miraculous "gift of tongues" to draw them together once a week to consider the message of the Lord. They needed that the message should come in this miraculous way, in order that it might be the better appreciated by them and be of the Lord and not of themselves. Then, too, this made opportunity for another gift, "the interpretation of tongues." Thus by the various gifts they were drawn together and edified and built up, until such times as the books of the New Testament gradually accumulated and, after the death of the Apostles and the consequent cessation of the "gifts," these Divine providences of the written Word were quite sufficient, yea, better every way, as the Apostle sets forth in this lesson.

In this epistle St. Paul has been gradually leading the minds of his readers up to a higher appreciation of the blessings they enjoyed. In the chapter preceding our lesson he calls attention to these various facts and the oneness of the Church, and the Divine intent that each member should love and co-operate with the other. He pointed out to them that they were putting rather too high a value upon the "gift of tongues." That, while this "gift" had its proper place in the Church as a blessing, a still higher lesson lay in the ability to present Truth in a well-understood tongue or language. He declared himself able to speak with more tongues than any of them, and yet pointed out that he preferred to speak in the tongue which would be understood by his hearers. Finally in his argument he came to our present lesson and gave it as a climax to his hints preceding.

The Tongue of Love Superior to All

Boldly the Apostle sets forth a great Truth, which has come to be more and more recognized amongst Christian people everywhere, and that in proportion to their development in the character-likeness of their Redeemer, in proportion to their development as children of God. St. Paul sets forth that not knowledge, not wisdom, not talents, not "gifts" of any kind are the things most to be sought for, but Love—because God is Love, and because all who would be pleasing to God must develop this character, this disposition, and because, according to the Divine Law, none will ever have full Divine approval or eternal life on any other plane of being, without the full establishment in the heart, in the character, of this Divine quality—love. Therefore "Love is the fulfilling of the Law."

In St. Paul's forceful language, if he had all the tongues of earth and of heaven and could speak them with perfection and charming rhythm, these would still not constitute a proof of his harmony with God and his acceptance to life eternal. Should he do all this in a perfunctory manner, even to the extent of speaking of the Divine character and in the interests and welfare of his fellows, he might still have no heart in the matter, but be merely like a sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. The argument is that tongues, therefore, were not to be esteemed as a proof of Christian character.

Next he argues respecting prophecy, oratory and the understanding of mysteries and knowledge and the possession of mountain-moving faith, and he asks, Would these abilities not signify a glorious development and a full acceptance with God and an assurance of life eternal? He answers us, No, any of these or all of these abilities, precious as they are, in the Divine estimation would have no value whatever, would profit us nothing, unless mixed with love and based upon love. How his argument exalts this love quality before our minds! He proceeds to say that although all of our goods were given to feed the poor and though, as martyrs, our bodies should be burned at the stake, if the motive, the sentiment, behind the giving and behind the endurance of martyrdom were not love, there would be no reward—it would profit us nothing.

Love's Constituent Elements

To those of the Lord's people who have never studied out what love is—what are its elements, its constituent parts, the Apostle's suggestions here will seem like a revelation. He enumerates nine ingredients:

(1) Patience—"Love suffereth long;"

(2) Kindness—"And is kind;"

(3) Generosity—"Love envieth not;"

(4) Humility—"Love vaunteth not itself; is not puffed up;"

(5) Courtesy—"Doth not behave itself unseemly;"

(6) Unselfishness—"Seeketh not her own;"

(7) Good Temper—"Is not easily provoked;"

(8) Guilelessness—"Thinketh no evil;"

(9) Honesty—"Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the Truth."

What a wonderful world this would be even with all of its aches and pains physical, if every member of our race were perfect in these qualities enumerated! However, it would be a useless waste of time to weep over what we have not, or to unnecessarily chide our neighbors and friends because they, like ourselves, are not perfect in love. Indeed, the more we come to understand the teachings of God's Word, the more of sympathy we may have with the poor "groaning creation." In one sense of the word our sympathies are all for this glorious standard which the Apostle holds up before us. We cannot sympathize with the evil, the error, the wrong. It is uncongenial to us. But, understanding the situation, we can sympathize with our fellows and with ourselves, as being in a fallen condition, in which none of us can do the things which we would.

The Scriptural key to the situation is that as a race we were born and shapen in iniquity and in sin did our mothers conceive us. The calamity of sin, imperfection and death affecting us morally, mentally and physically, has injured the whole world and made us what the Apostle describes a "groaning creation." How this knowledge of the facts of the case possessed by so few, understood and appreciated by so few, should tend to make these few a peculiar people in their loving sympathies and kindnesses towards their fellows in distress! Alas, the difficulty is that even these few who know these facts from the Divine Word have selfishness so ingrained in their constitutions, and are so oppressed by the cares of this life that their sympathies are often not all that they should be.

New Creatures Only Appealed To

It is for these reasons that the Scriptures do not address the natural man—because his mind is so sodden with selfishness that his eye of pity and his ear of sympathy are well nigh closed. Instead of appealing to the natural man in general, the Scriptures represent that the Lord specially draws some possessed of certain qualities of heart and mind, and specially leads these to a knowledge of the Redeemer, leaving it open with them to accept or to reject the offer of Divine grace and forgiveness. Such as respond are still further enlightened and, if further responsive, they are treated as justified because of their faith in Jesus and his blood; then are granted further to them special opportunities, and exhortations to make a full consecration of themselves to the Lord and his service forever—unto death. If they still respond and make this consecration they then have come to the place where the Lord is pleased to reckon them dead to earthly things, according to their profession, and to beget them of the holy Spirit and the glorious promises of his Word, and to count them as New Creatures in Christ—as members of the Redeemer's Body, which is the Church.

Now they have reached the stage where, as children of God, they must go to school and develop in knowledge and in character—to be made actually fit, prepared, suitable, for eternal life and a share with their Redeemer in his Kingdom.

The Lessons of the School

When we enter the School of Christ, the lesson, as a whole, set before us is expressed in the Great Teacher's words, "Be ye like unto your Father which is in heaven." The same thought is presented to us in the Apostle's words when he assures us that God has predetermined that only such as become copies of his dear Son—in character likeness—can be his joint-heirs in the promised Kingdom. We did not know that so much was required when we entered the School of Christ. We did not understand all that we did when we made our consecration even unto death in the service of righteousness. However, no advantage was taken of us; for what was presented to us and what we did consecrate to do, includes everything in our power and no more—

even unto death. So, then, no lesson that can come to us is beyond our covenant or agreement to perform.

The Apostle in the spectrum of love given us in this lesson is delineating the various parts of this one great lesson of Christ-likeness, which is God-likeness. He is pointing out what constitutes such a character as God desires we shall have, and such as God has predetermined we must have, in order to be worthy of the gift of God, eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Love Viewed in Comparison

It beareth all things; believeth all things; hopeth all things; endureth all things. Its elements of patience and gentleness are love in the sense of willingness to bear, to endure under all sorts of opposition, wherever it sees a proper subject for its sympathy. It believeth all things in the sense that it is not given to doubt, to disbelieve, to impugn the motives and truthfulness of its fellows. Only after full and convincing proofs to the contrary will it cease to exercise faith. Love hopeth all things in the sense that it desires a blessing for all with whom it is in contact and is continually striving, in harmony with its desire, to do them good. Love endureth all things in the sense that it cannot be quenched wherever there is anything that it can properly exercise itself upon. These qualities viewed from another standpoint might be interpreted thus: "Beareth all things," as enduring pressure on every side without being crushed; "Believeth all things" as being full of faith in the Divine promises and arrangement, doubting nothing; "Hopeth all things" in the sense that this perfect love toward God enables the heart to be full of confidence toward the Almighty One, in whose love it reposes; "Endureth all things" in the sense that the soul that is united to the God of Love by the link of love cannot be crushed, cannot be overcome, because this is the Divine will, the Divine arrangement. God will not suffer such to be tempted above that they are able to bear, but will, with every temptation, provide a way of escape.

The Apostle institutes a comparison as between love and some of the "gifts" which the Corinthian brethren properly estimated highly. He would have us all see how infinitely higher Love is than any of these gifts in which the early Church rejoiced. Love is not a gift, but a growth, a fruitage which must be developed in the garden of our souls and be tended with much care, in order to its proper development. He says that Love never faileth; but that other things will fail, namely, the power of prophesy or oratory, the gift of tongues, knowledge, etc. These would lose their value as the changing conditions would comparatively do away with their necessity. Prophesying would be done away with, the gift of tongues would cease, and knowledge would vanish. The Apostle's argument is that these things would all come to an end necessarily, when perfection would come in, because all of our gifts and talents are imperfect. Surely with our glorious "change" in the First Resurrection and with the ushering in of the Millennium our conditions would be so different that many things highly esteemed in the lesser light and under the unfavorable conditions of the present would then be valueless. Just so flints were once valuable for the striking of a light, but are now never used, being supplanted by matches, electric lights, etc. Many of those gifts, however, including the gift of tongues, perished long before the morning light of the Millennium—ceased shortly after the death of the Apostles, because those gifts were imparted only by the Apostles.

Next the Apostle compares the gifts of the Spirit with the fruitage of the Spirit and shows that the former, in contrast with the latter, were as the toys of childhood in comparison with the valuables of manhood. "When I was a child, I spake as a child, but when I became a man I put away childish things." So the gifts of tongues, interpretation of tongues, etc., were given to the Church in its infancy and served useful purposes then, but might well be put away as the Church emerged from infancy to the strength and development accruing from a greater knowledge of God's great Plan. The milk of the Word and the strong meat of the Word were intended by God to develop the members of the Body of Christ, until they all come to the stature of manhood in Christ. The more advanced the Christian, the more surely would he know that the gifts of the Spirit were merely like a childish plaything to be supplemented by the fruits of the Spirit, much more valuable to the Church in its developed condition.

St. Paul points us further to the fact that we are living not merely for the present, but specially for the future; and that whatever we can develop here which will last us into the eternal future, must certainly be the most important matter for us to acquire. He would have us see that most important thing to the Christian—love—the Love which he has described. Our knowledge, tongues, etc., of the present time are only mere shadows of the great powers which will be ours, if we attain to the glorious blessings of the First Resurrection. Whatever clearness of sight we have at the present time we shall then find but darkness in comparison with that full light of the glorious morning-time. Where now we see as through an obscure glass, then we shall see face to face. Now we know in part; then we shall know as we are known.

Faith, Hope and Love

St. Paul would have the Church see that faith, hope and love, three fruits of the Spirit, are far superior to all the "gifts" of the Spirit of any kind, because these will abide all through the age. Until the Millennial morning we shall need faith; we shall need hope; we shall need love. We cannot get along without them. We cannot make any progress in the footsteps of Jesus without them. But if we seek to contrast these imperfect qualities amongst themselves, he points out that the chiefest of these is love. Why the chiefest? Because it is the Divine quality without which, with all the other qualities possessed, we should still be unsatisfactory to God. It is the quality which will persist to all eternity. We shall always need to have love, if we abide in Divine favor. As for faith and hope, excellent qualities though they be, the time will come when they will be swallowed up by sight, by fruition, by the actualities of the glorious condition of fellowship with the Lord. But Love will never fail. Amongst all the graces of the Spirit it stands supreme and eternal.

Only because of serious misconceptions of Love is it necessary or even proper for us to remind our readers, in the Apostle's words, that this love quality is not merely a form of loving words, nor merely kind words and smiles, but that it goes deeply into our natures and includes our deeds and our heart sentiments.—1 John 3:18; Z. '09:228-231.

Israel and Spiritual Israel

Golden Text:—"The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and plenteous in mercy."—Psalm 103:8.

ISRAEL'S history is in sharp contrast with that of any other nation of earth. How consistent with the facts is the Scriptural declaration concerning Israel, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth." (Amos 3:2.) God, of course, knew of the other nations, and in a general way caused his sun to shine upon the just and the unjust, the evil and the good. He has supervised the affairs of the nations to the extent of hindering conditions which would be inimical to his gracious plans for the ultimate blessing of all the families of the earth; but, as declared, he revealed himself to and was in active co-operation with the nation of Israel alone, the seed of Abraham, up to the time that they were cast off, when they rejected Messiah. Since then, as we have seen, the divine care, blessing, promises, revelations, etc., have been turned to Spiritual Israel—the Spiritual Seed of Abraham, Christ and the Church, the new nation, the Royal Priesthood, the Holy People.

We get the most good from the experiences of fleshly Israel by seeing through them as types, figures, illustrations, the Lord's providences toward Spiritual Israel. Thus Israel's deliverance from Egyptian bondage corresponds to our deliverance from the bondage of sin, condemnation and death. Their deliverer, Moses, corresponds to our deliverer, Jesus. Their trial and testing at the Red Sea correspond to the test of our full consecration to the Lord at the beginning of our journey—the entrance upon the narrow way. The springs and oases of their desert journey to Sinai correspond well with the times of refreshing of a spiritual kind granted to us in the midst of our trying experiences, resulting from our following our Leader and finding as a consequence the world against us. Their coming to Sinai corresponds in some measure with our growth in knowledge and our greater responsibility therefor, and our fuller realization of the greatness of our God and the responsibilities of the relationship to him into which we have entered. Their daily portion of manna, God's supply, but painstakingly received, corresponds well to our spiritual sustenance received of the Lord from his storehouse, the Bible. Although the supply is sufficient, time and patient perseverance are requisite for securing it, for gathering it. The fact that their manna came every day, and in the proportion necessary, well illustrates the fact that our spiritual food must be partaken of daily, must be gathered daily—"meat in due season."

The short journey to Kadesh-Barnea, from whence spies went forth, indicates the short time which should elapse with us before we should enter into the riches of God's favor by faith. The viewing of the land enjoyed by Caleb and Joshua represents well the joyful experiences of those who fully trust in the Lord and fully consecrate to him and are already able even on this side the vail to enter into the joys of the Lord by faith. The evil report of the other spies, and the unwillingness of the Israelites to go forward in faith to possess the land, represent well the condition of the majority of the Lord's people—they cannot enjoy because they cannot believe, because they have not sufficient faith in the power of God and in the certainty of his promises.

Merciful and Gracious, Slow to Anger

Our Golden Text reminds us that the Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and plenteous in mercy, and we see this well illustrated in the case of fleshly Israel in the wilderness experiences, in the history of the Lord's people of this Gospel Age, nominal spiritual Israel, and also in the cases of the faithful ones. Can we not all realize how patient and merciful the Lord has been to us in our various experiences in life? Can we not see how he would have been fully justified in cancelling our Covenant long ago, and that only of his mercy and love have we been permitted to come thus far on the way toward the heavenly Kingdom? Surely a realization of these things should make us both humble and trustful. Moreover the Lord informs us that he has a still further requirement, namely, that if we would appreciate his greatness and mercy through Christ in our own cases we shall exercise similarly mercy and forbearance toward others who may transgress against us. Indeed, so earnest is the Lord in impressing this matter upon us that he positively declares that none of us can maintain relationship with him except as he shall develop this spirit, this character, in relationship to his brethren and fellow-servants. How generous, how considerate, how moderate, how forgiving, all this should lead us to be in our dealings with the brethren, especially with those who have in any measure wounded or injured us or our interests.

Finally, let us remember Moses on Mount Nebo looking across Jordan into the promised land—and preparing for his burial. Let us more and more realize that this should be our attitude: that as the Body of Christ in the flesh we are soon to die, and that beyond the vail we will be New Creatures. Let us remember that the mountain-top of Christian experience should now be our portion, and that from thence the clear eye of faith should be able distinctly to discern the outlines of the glorious inheritance which the Lord hath in reservation for them that love him, the possession of which we are hoping so soon to share.—Z. '07 : 269, 270.

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Love for the brethren is set forth in the Scriptures as one of the indisputable evidences of our having attained membership in the body of Christ. This love may be of varying degrees, but it must be ours in some degree if we are the Lord's, for "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his." (Rom. 8:9.) But this flame of sacred love for the brethren kindled in our hearts is not sufficient; it must blaze, burn, and produce in us not merely a warmth of love but a consuming love—love which will not only overlook various weaknesses and imperfections in the brotherhood, and will carefully note every good quality, but love which is ready to lay down life on behalf of the brethren because they belong to Christ, because they are of his consecrated ones, however much they may need to strive against sin and weaknesses.—Z. '07 : 35.

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From the moment we become believers in Christ and turn from sin and seek forgiveness and thus become eligible to God's favor, we are urged to present our bodies living sacrifices to him and thus to receive of him an adoption of his spirit to fellowship. This in turn proves to be but the entrance way to the school of Christ, where they are to be taught as sons of God, to be prepared for the glorious work in association with their Redeemer in his glorious Kingdom. As they grow in grace and knowledge, they grow in appreciation of divine favor. As the poet has said,

> "Oh, let no earth-born cloud arise
> To hide thee from thy servant's eyes."

Such as are in this attitude of heart are prepared to meet their God at any time. Indeed their meeting with him has already begun, and anything that will serve in any degree to hinder its pleasurable continuance will be a disaster indeed.—Z. '08 : 266.

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We are not to seek our own wills or our own ways, but rather to look for and accept the Lord's providential guidance of our interests and to prefer this, knowing that he is able always to make all things work together for our good as New Creatures.—Z. '08 :173.

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Every one receiving the light should take heed to it as a precious thing lest he lose it, and have darkness instead. The eye, the light, represents the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, which has the greatest power to bless us; and this, if lost, would mean to us even a greater darkness than that we experienced before coming to a knowledge of the Lord.—Z. '14 :11.

◇

The sheep of the present Age, who are to be exalted, and are to do a shepherding work for the sheep of the incoming Age, are given a distinct and peculiar training, to fit them for their future great work. From the time they are accepted to this higher plane, they are dealt with accordingly. This means that they must have certain trials and afflictions, according to the flesh. And if these sheep recognize that these difficult experiences of the way are necessary, they can well rejoice. If they have full confidence in the Shepherd, they know that He will permit them to have no needless experiences, and none which will be to their injury; but that he will overrule all their affairs, and will cause all things to work together for their good, because they love Him, because they are the called according to God's Purpose.—Z. '14 :199.

◇

The Lord knoweth what is necessary for us to know. It is sufficient that we have the gracious promise that all things shall work together for good to those who love him, and that we should be able to trust him, come what may.—Z. '05 : 254.

◇

"Lead us not into temptation (to abandon us there)." We feel our own weakness, imperfection; hence, while knowing that we must be brought in Divine providence into positions of trial and testing, we may well pray not to be abandoned there, not to be left to our own strength, but that in harmony with the Lord's agreement His grace may be sufficient for us.—Z. '12 :150.

◇

It was said of the Apostles that people "took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus and learned of Him." We should so live before all, both the brethren and the world, that they would thus take knowledge of us. We should see to it that our conduct is a credit to the great and noble Cause with which we are identified.—Z. '16 : 29, 30.

◇

The Psalmist says, "Let not an evil speaker be established in the earth." See also St. Paul's counsel to Titus, 3 : 2-8, and to Timothy. (1 Tim. 3 :11.) Oh, that the spirit of love and kindness and consideration one for another might so richly dwell in every member of the Church of Christ that each one would not only refrain from speaking evil of a brother or sister, but that it would give pain to hear a defamatory tale about any one, and particularly about a fellow-pilgrim in the "narrow way"!—Z. '16 : 313.

◇

The mischief that can be done with the tongue is almost unlimited. How watchful and prayerful, then, we should be of our influence! We urge a careful rereading of Vol, 6, pp. 583-588, of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES. It is good that our pure minds be stirred up by way of remembrance. We believe that our time is short in which to complete our work of character structure. This should be impressed upon us more and more as we see one after another of the Body members of Christ passing beyond the veil. Let us seek by prayer and by daily, yea, hourly effort, that we may in all things become copies of God's dear Son, and hear, when our time shall come, the Master's sweet "Well done!"—Z. '16:313.

◇

The Apostle shows (1 Cor. 12:24-26), there need be no schism in the Body; for the members all have a mutual care and a mutual love one for another—a care which seeks to encourage and strengthen all that is good and to discourage, by our example and sometimes by a kindly word, all that is unbecoming, and a love that throws its mantle over a deformity and endeavors to conceal a fault rather than to expose the weaker brother or sister to the reproach of the other brethren. Thus, in the true Church of Christ, which is knit together in love, if one member suffer, all the members suffer with him; or if one member be honored, all the members rejoice with him, and to some degree share the honor, just as in an earthly family, when one member rises to an honorable distinction, all the members of the family partake of that honor and joy.—Z. '14:311.

◇

"The time is short! Then be thy heart a brother's
To every heart that needs thy help in aught.
How much they need the sympathy of others!
The time, the time is short!"—Z. '16:325.

◇

How marvelously has our God led us, His Covenant people, through the wilderness of this world, and provided for our needs day by day! How the chastenings of His loving hand have kept our feet from wandering; or if we have turned at any time to the right hand, or to the left, how has His love drawn us back! And has He not brought us into a good land, a land of brooks of water, a land of fountains and depths, a land of oil olive and honey, a land wherein we eat bread, the Bread of Heaven, without scarceness? Truly, we have not lacked anything in it. If Israel of old had reason to prove their gratitude and love to God, how much more reason have we, Spiritual Israel!—Z. '14:263.

◇

All of the Lord's people . . . should be continually on the alert to note opportunities for service, and should expect to be guided and used of the Lord.—Z. '16:73.

◇

None can ever be His joint-heirs in the Kingdom except as they shall demonstrate that they are possessed and controlled by the same spirit as that of their Redeemer.—Z. '06:25.

◇

Humility is undoubtedly one of the most important of our lessons—those who in any degree neglect it will surely find trouble as a result.—Z. '05:297.

Those who are living as closely as possible to the Lord in faith and obedience and knowledge are absolutely safe and need fear none of the powers of darkness. We believe that all others are unsafe propositions, as they are distant from this safe habitation.—Z. '08:366.

◇

In our experience the Passover season has always been one of special danger, special besetment to the Lord's consecrated people. For some reason unknown to us the Adversary seems to be permitted to have special power at this time. We have noticed time after time that, as we approach the Passover season, Satan's activity has been manifested by some kind of an attack upon the Truth and by some kind of a special trial or test upon the Truth in connection therewith. Although we know in advance that none of the Lord's disciples true at heart will be plucked out of his hand by the Adversary, nevertheless we fancy that we can sympathize to some extent with our Lord's feelings when he exhorted the disciples to watch and pray, lest they enter into temptation.—Z. '06:119.

◇

We are all more or less inclined to think of what might have been if something had been different—apt to forget that our Lord and Master has full charge of all of our affairs if we are truly, consecratedly his, and that no "if" of chance has to do with the little flock.—Z. '05:93.

◇

We who are looking forward to the close of our journey, and that before very long, should see that our lives are spent day by day in such a manner that some will be the happier for them; and that our decease will be recognized by some, at least, as a loss.—Z. '16:94.

◇

The merit in our Lord was that of the willing mind, the obedient heart which delighted to do the Father's will, in the perfect body in which it was tested to "obedience even unto death, even to the death of the cross." With us also, the thing that is meritorious in the sight of the Father is the **willing mind,** the **obedient heart,** though in an imperfect body, reckoned perfect through faith in the precious blood.—Z. '09:311.

◇

The Lord's real disciples have been one in heart, in purpose, with himself and with each other throughout this Gosepl age, and they are one today. With fellowship of heart and with purpose true and real, they are all both justified and sanctified in Christ Jesus, who counts not in their number any of those who are tares, goats or wolves. "The Lord knoweth them that are his." Soon they shall be one in a larger and more complete and comprehensive sense, when they all shall be gathered to and united with the Lord their Head as his Bride and joint-heirs. Then they shall be one in the fullest sense, and then indeed the world shall believe, for the Millennial Sun of Glory shall then shine out, revealing fully the divine character and plan and filling the whole earth with the knowledge of the Glory of God.—Z. '03:102.

STANDFAST BIBLE STUDENTS' CENTRAL CONVENTION

MARCH 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th, 1922

Bloomington Hall, 2415 Bloomington Avenue, Minneapolis, Minn.

CHAIRMAN - Bro. Oscar Kuenzi SECRETARY - - - Bro. Rubin

FRIDAY, March 3rd— JUSTICE

"Whatsoever things are just . . . think on these things."
—Phil. 4:8.

10:00 A.M.—Address of Welcome..........Bro. Johnson
Response .... Chairman
10:30 A.M.—Bethel Service.
10:45 A.M.—Discourse ....Bro. Heard

2:00 P.M.—Praise and Testimony.
3:00 P.M.—Intermission.
3:30 P.M.—Songs of Solomon Study..........Bro. Zinck

7:30 P.M.—Praise Service.
7:45 P.M.—Old Corn Gem Study (The Labor of Love to be Rewarded)
..........Bro. Heard

◇

SATURDAY, March 4th— PURITY

"Whatsoever things are pure, lovely and of good report . . . think on these things."—Phil. 4:8.

10:30 A.M.—Bethel Service.
10:45 P.M.—Old Corn Gem Study (The Work for a Converted Will)
..........Bro. O. Kuenzi

2:00 P.M.—Praise and Testimony.
3:00 P.M.—Intermission.
3:30 P.M.—Temple Study ....Bro. Heard

7:30 P.M.—Praise Service.
7:45 P.M.—Discourse ....Bro. Zinck

◇

SUNDAY, March 5th— PRAISE

"If there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."—Phil. 4:8.

10:30 A.M.—Bethel Service.
10.45 A.M.—Tabernacle Study ....Bro. Heard

2:00 P.M.—Praise and Testimony.
3:00 P.M.—Intermission.
3:30 P.M.—Old Corn Gem Study (The Humble to be Exalted)........
..........Bro. Zinck

7:30 P.M.—Praise Service.
7:45 P.M.—Temple Study ....Bro. Heard

◇

MONDAY, March 6th— CONTENTMENT

"I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound."—Phil. 4:11, 12.

10:30 A.M.—Bethel Service.
10:45 A.M.—Songs of Solomon Study..........Bro. Heard

2:00 P.M.—Praise and Testimony.
3:00 P.M.—Intermission.
3:30 P.M.—Temple Study ....Bro. Zinck

7:30 P.M.—Praise Service.
7:45 P.M.—Discourse ....Bro. Heard

LOVE FEAST

Old Corn Gems

NUMBER SEVENTY-SEVEN

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KERNELS KERNELS KERNELS

"Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection from the dead." (1 Cor. 15:21.) By the sacrifice of a perfect human existence is secured the right of the priest to restore. But beyond the right or privilege of restoring, the priest must have the power, and power would of necessity presuppose his own everlasting existence. He must have power to create, since to restore to being that which had completely lost existence is to re-create it, and is a greater work even than the first creation; he must also have perfect knowledge, both of God's requirements and of human necessities, as well as perfect ability to guide a race so destitute back to the glorious heights of perfection and blessed harmony and communion with God.

What an office! Who would presume to assume such a title? It belongs really and only to Jehovah's Anointed. Even Jesus, "the Anointed One, did not glorify himself to become a high priest," but he has "been declared by God a high priest according to the order of Melchisedec." (Heb. 5:4, 5, 10—Diaglott.) Jehovah honored him by inviting him to that position, and giving him all power to fill it. In harmony with God's plan, not only has Jesus, his Anointed one, been chosen as the chief, or high priest, but the "little flock," who follow him in sacrifice now, are called to be joint-heirs with him in the same honor. "If we suffer with him we shall also be glorified together." Jesus alone is the great High Priest; but the Gospel Church, redeemed by his death and associated with him now in sacrifice and to be associated with him in divine power hereafter, is counted in with him, and, together with him, will constitute the great Prophet, Priest and King promised, to liberate and bless the groaning creation—the Seed of Promise.—Gen. 22:18; 28:14; Gal. 3:29; Acts 3:20-23; Psa. 110:4; Z. '07:69, 70.

◆

Is it not true that God has done for us exceeding abundantly more than we could have asked or thought according to the riches of his grace? (Eph. 3:20.) How profitable it is for us to turn our minds backward and note the steps by which divine grace has led us to our present station, in which we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. When we were without strength and without merit Christ died for the ungodly, including us. We are amongst the favored ones who heard of the grace of God; we are amongst the comparatively few whose ears and eyes of understanding were opened to a realization of the Lord's grace and truth; we are amongst the still fewer number who, having heard, were enabled to rejoice with joy unspeakable and who appropriate the blessing to ourselves. We are amongst the still fewer number who received not the grace of God in vain.—Z. '07:365.

◆

The great business in life of those who would honor and serve the Lord is to serve the brethren and the Truth.—Z. '13:314.

There is to be no peace between the New Creature and his flesh. We are to take warning from Natural Israel in this respect. Failure on their part to drive out and destroy their enemies completely, as God commanded, was a source of constant trouble and ensnarement, and a cause of much idolatry and sin to Israel. And their experiences "were written for our admonition." Our warfare against spiritual foes must result in the utter destruction of the fleshly mind, and will also mean the death of the human body.—Z. '15:180, 181.

◆

The privilege of prayer is a very wonderful one: it implies that the suppliant is on terms of intimate acquaintance with the great Creator of the universe, so that he is welcomed into the divine presence and heart. In accord with this the symbolical representation is that the prayers of the saints of God ascend before him as a sweet incense—the heavenly Father is pleased to receive the humblest worship and reverent petitions of his child adopted into his family through Jesus Christ.—Z. '06:203.

◆

St. Paul's great unselfishness was one of his grand traits, and we think it would be well for each of us to cultivate that trait to a greater degree, looking to the interest of the brethren, willing to subordinate our own preferences and our own ways in certain particulars if we can see that this would be an aid to others, especially an aid to a number of others. This is the Spirit of Christ; this is certainly in full accord with all the instructions of the Lord—that we should humble ourselves, and in honor prefer one another, even to the extent of self-sacrifice.—Z. '10:312.

◆

NOTE

In Old Corn Gems No. 75, page 10, it states that the Memorial Supper should be celebrated on Tuesday, April 10th, after 6 o'clock p.m. This should read **Monday**, April 10th, after 6 p.m.

◆

GENERAL CONVENTION

General Convention of Standfast Bible Students at the Labor Hall, 1318 Broad Street, Victoria, B.C., on Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday, April 14th, 15th, 16th and 17th, 1922. All Standfast Brethren will be welcome. Two light meals will be provided daily by the local Ecclesia. Reception Committee will meet boats and trains. Programme and further information in Corn Gems No. 78. Bro. J. H. Bartlett, P.O. Box 7, Victoria, B.C., will be Secretary of the Convention.

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OLD CORN GEMS

NUMBER SEVENTY-SEVEN

"And they did eat of the OLD CORN of the land on the morrow after the Passover . . . and the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the OLD CORN of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year." Joshua 5:11-12.

A SAFE RULE

"WHERE A BROTHER GIVES AN INTERPRETATION OF A SCRIPTURE WHICH DIFFERS FROM THAT GIVEN BY BROTHER RUSSELL, AND BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION SEEMS REASONABLE AND IN HARMONY WITH THE PLAN OF GOD, THEN WE BELIEVE IT A SAFE RULE TO FOLLOW BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION, FOR THE REASON THAT HE IS THE SERVANT OF THE CHURCH, SO CONSTITUTED BY THE LORD FOR THE LAODICEAN PERIOD; AND THEREFORE WE SHOULD EXPECT THE LORD TO TEACH US THROUGH HIM. WHERE THERE ARISES A DOUBT IN THE MIND AS TO WHICH INTERPRETATION IS CORRECT, THEN IT IS ALWAYS SAFER TO RESOLVE THAT DOUBT IN FAVOR OF BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION. WE BELIEVE SUCH TO BE IN HARMONY WITH THE LORD'S WILL." Z. '18:51.

I Pray for Them

John 17:15-26.

ON the night of the institution of the memorial of his death, our Lord, so far from being concerned wholly with himself and his approaching crucifixion, was specially thinking of and praying for his disciples. The closing verse of John 16 records his words of admonition, "These things have I spoken unto you that in me ye may have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." These words spake Jesus and lifted up his eyes to heaven in prayer for his disciples, saying, "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for those whom thou hast given me; for they are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thy own name those whom thou hast given me."

Our Lord's entire life furnishes an illustration of what the Apostle commends to all the Church in the words, "Pray without ceasing." Our Lord evidently was always in that prayerful attitude of heart, which was filled with thankfulness to the Father in respect to all of life's affairs, which recognized his guardian care, which trusted him, confided in him and in every distressing circumstance looked to him to overrule and to cause all experiences to work for good. But our Lord's constant attitude of prayer without ceasing did not hinder his more particular devotions when he turned aside from the affairs of life to speak to the Father in secret—sometimes briefly and sometimes spending a whole night in prayer in the mountain solitude. Though he loved his disciples they were not yet begotten of the Holy Spirit and could not fully comprehend matters from his standpoint. The Father alone was able to comprehend the full situation, and hence the very isolation of our Lord from all human help drew him the nearer and the oftener to the Father in prayer.

So it is or should be with the Lord's followers. Proportionately as we grow in his character likeness we will similarly pray without ceasing and in everything give thanks, singing and making melody in our hearts to the Lord, realizing him as the center of all our hopes and ambitions and joys. And similarly we will avail ourselves of the privilege of more formal approaches to the throne of grace, to obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Similarly also, in proportion as at times we may find that our dear ones either of earthly or spiritual relationship are unable to sympathize with our experiences, we may be profited by such a lack of earthly sympathy in that the experiences will send us the more frequently to the heavenly Comforter from whom we will derive the greater blessing and joy.

The Church Not the World

In this prayer, as elsewhere throughout the inspired Word, a sharp line of distinction is drawn as between the Church and the world. A great loss is sustained by those who do not see this, for it wonderfully assists in the "rightly dividing of the Word of Truth." . . .

Our Lord prayed not for the world, because the Lord's time for dealing with the world had not yet come—would not come until after the selection of the Church, the body of Christ. He prayed for the apostles especially, because they would be his special representatives in the world, and his prayer included also all of the five hundred brethren who up to that time had believed on him with sincere hearts. Not only so, but (v. 20) he extended the petition so as to cover all of a similar class even to the end of the age—all who should believe on him so thoroughly, so sincerely, that their faith would separate them from the world to be his disciples, his followers in the narrow way in very truth.

What He Did Not Pray For

As we look out over the world today and take a view of the nominal Christian Church, and attempt to put ourselves in the place of the nominal Christian believer and his professed view of matters, and if, then, we suppose that the Lord prayed for the present condition of things, his prayer would be something like this:

I pray that my followers may become very numerous, very wealthy and very learned, that they may be the notables of the world. I pray that they may be divided up into great denominations, some holding one fragment of truth and some another, blending the same with much of inconsistency and error. . . .

I pray that the heathen world may be charmed with the glorious effect of my teachings upon Christendom, and that all the heathen may say with one voice, Let us also become partisan and sectarian. Let us also arm and fight. Let us also learn of the practices of these Christian nations that they do not have the entire monopoly of profanity and drunkenness and debauchery, that we may share in these.

What Our Lord Did Pray For

Very different was our Lord's petition. His prayer represents his disciples as being a small minority in the world, hated of the world, opposed by the world, misunderstood by the world, not many great, not many wise, not many learned, not many rich, not many noble—chiefly the poor and altogether a "little flock." The characteristics of the disciples whom Jesus personally gathered were to be expected in all who should afterward be gathered to him as his true followers.

Notwithstanding the great array of Christian nations and Christian sects, the Lord "knoweth them that are his;" and in harmony with this prayer he has not during the age separated his people from the world, but left them in the world, merely separating them so far as the heart is concerned—"I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil." We are not to say that the evil is good, we are not to say that the world has become saintly; it is still evil. Christendom is practically in the same condition today that Judaism was in when it crucified the Lord and persecuted his followers.

Then the chief sect of the Jews called themselves God's holy people (the meaning of the word Pharisee), and the whole nation stood on a plane of outward morality which the Lord declared was in his sight a farce. He called the leaders whited sepulchers, inwardly full of corruption. He told them that while they washed the outside of the cup they left it filthy within; that while they made broad their phylacteries and prayed in public, in their hearts they were far from a condition of holiness or love—so far that they would be willing to wrongfully take a home from a poor widow if the outward forms of the law permitted and if the transaction would not bring too much reproach (Matt. 23:14, 23-28.) It is much the same today; there is an outward gloss or veneer that in many cases is hypocritical, an outward form of worship, a drawing near with the lips while the heart is far from him, busy with fashion and dress and pleasure and money-making idolatries, if not with grosser sins.

Our Lord prayed that his true followers might be kept by heavenly power free from such conditions—out of sympathy with them, not of them. And we believe this has been true all down throughout this Gospel age. We believe that the Lord's prayer has been fulfilled, and that his scattered little flock, the branches of the true vine, have flourished in heart, spiritually, keeping up a separate life entirely from the nominal system, which is only a part of the world. We believe that the same is true today, and that these in the world but not of it are glad to forsake all to follow the Truth and the right.

"Sanctify Them Through Thy Truth"

The prayer, continuing, points out two things—first, how the Lord's followers will be kept, and, secondly, why they will be kept. (1) They will be kept because they are not of the world, because they have taken a positive stand on the Lord's side, because they have reckonedly died to the world and sin and been begotten again of the holy Spirit to newness of life. (2) They will be kept in the world, but not of it, by the power of the Truth in their hearts. The Truth will sanctify or separate them. Not any truth, not all truth, but the Truth—the Truth of the divine revelation respecting the divine character and the divine plan, and their relationship to these. Summing this all up the Lord declares, "My Word is Truth"—the Truth which only sanctifies and separates my disciples from the world.

We are aware that "doctrine" has become very unpopular in every quarter of the world and in the nominal Church. No wonder! The doctrines, the creeds, of the various sects and parties of Christendom are so mingled with error, so offensive to the spiritual senses of the spiritual mind, that they could have no pleasure in partaking of such things from their tables. The prophet describes the matter, saying, "All tables are full of vomit"—every creed formulated in the Dark Ages is necessarily repulsive today. But the Truth, "Thy Word is Truth," never becomes stale, never becomes rancid or offensive; it is still the Bread from Heaven, it is still the Word of Life; and all who are of the Truth, all who have progressed from being merely babes in Christ and by partaking of the meat of his Word have come to an appreciation of it, all who have been weaned from the milk and drawn from the breasts, can say with the poet respecting the wonderful story of the divine plan,

"It Satisfies My Longings as Nothing Else Can Do"

The Truth has a sanctifying power in the heart because it fills the longings of the heart. Every heart has talents and appeals which demand operation, activity. Something must be supplied to meet the hungerings and thirstings of these various talents and qualities of the mind. If the exceeding great and precious promises of the divine Word be not received into the heart to satisfy its cravings or longings, it will feed upon other things; and the world, the flesh and the devil are all crowding upon it, offering various attractions, some of which will be received if the heart be not filled and kept filled. Thus our Lord's parable represents a heart swept and garnished, with the devil cast out, and then that heart, still empty, is represented as being re-entered by seven devils. Our hearts need not only to be cleansed from sin through justification of life, through faith in Christ, but they need also to be filled with the Lord himself; and our Lord, who calls himself the Truth, furnishes to our hearts various truths as food, as nourishment, as filling our hearts and satisfying our cravings, and by thus filling he sanctifies those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, and thus separates them completely and keeps them separate from the world, its spirit, its hopes, its aims, its ambitions.

God's Power in God's Time

Have we love for righteousness? We cannot hope to find it in the world, nor hope to establish it here under present conditions. We are obliged to admit that nothing short of God's promised Kingdom can establish righteousness; hence our hearts, as Noah's dove, return to the Lord as the center and fountain of righteousness. Have we a desire for peace and joy? Our past experience in the world convinces us that, while the whole world is seeking for happiness, it has not found it. We who have found the Lord have found the secret of happiness, the Christian's secret of having every day a happy one. Do we long for power and influence that we may exercise them for good? The Word of Truth assures us that it is impossible to find them in present conditions, but that we shall, if faithful, attain to the power and glory, honor and immortality, in the First Resurrection, and that then our grandest hopes and ideals will be realized in the Kingdom blessings that will come to all the families of the earth. Do riches seem attractive to us? The Scriptures hold out the true riches, and assure us that in following the Lord all things are ours by faith now, and shall be actually ours by and by, when we become our Master's associates in the heavenly Kingdom. . . .

Glory Shared With Church

Continuing our Lord declares, "For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth." This seems to carry with it the thought, elsewhere suggested in this prayer, that our Lord had by this time come to a full realization of the Father's plan, namely, that his disciples were to be developed for the purpose of becoming his joint-heirs in the Kingdom, sharers in his glory. At first thought such a sharing of the great glory of the Kingdom might appear to be a lessening of the great glory of Jesus, just as the appointment of the seventy elders of Israel to be associates with Moses in judging Israel seemed at first to be a contraction or diminution of the dignity or authority of Moses.

But as Moses in the type was very meek, and gladly welcomed all the elders to joint-service, saying, "Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his Spirit upon them!" (Num. 11:29), so the Lord Jesus, so far from feeling that the gathering out of the Church to be his joint-heirs in the Kingdom would diminish his glory, joined heartily in the divine plan, and declares here that he set himself apart, he separated himself from that feature of the glory and dignity of the Father's reward that his followers might have a share in it, that they might become his joint-heirs, being set apart and brought to this honor through the Truth, through the great and precious promises bestowed upon them. This same thought seems to be presented in the words (vs. 22, 23)—"The glory which thou gavest me I have given them, that they may be one even as we are one: I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me."

The love of God pervades our hearts so that selfishness has no room there, and thus it was that our dear Redeemer, instead of feeling jealous that any others should be exalted to the divine nature, participators in the Kingdom, in this prayer to the Father declares his full acquiescence in the plan, his hearty co-operation, his joy to have it so. What a thought this gives to us as the prospective Bride, already espoused to the heavenly Bridegroom. He is pleased to exalt us from our lowly estate to be one with himself in his Kingdom, in his throne, in his Father's love.

Wonder of wonders! Where will the divine compassion cease! While we were yet sinners, under divine condemnation of death, we were loved and redeemed at a great price; and now, having been redeemed, we hear the voice celestial saying, "Come up higher," yea, even to the throne, to joint-heirship with the King of kings, the Lord of lords, the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. Could we keep ever before our minds this grand display of love and unselfishness how thoroughly it would scatter from the minds of all who are seeking to be copies of God's dear Son every thought of rivalry one with another. How it would cause us to rejoice in the growing usefulness and advancement in the Lord's service of every member of the body. How we should more and more feel what the Scriptures describe as "in honor preferring one another," and which rejoices in the prosperity of a brother, in his growing usefulness in the Church, in the growing evidences of his favor with God and man. Those who can thus rejoice in the prosperity of the fellow-members of the body have another evidence of their growth in the likeness of our great and glorious Head. Those who are without this sentiment should strive for it and be very discontented until it is attained.

"That They All May Be One"

. . . Our Lord's prayer, "That they all may be one," has been fulfilled throughout the age. All who have been truly his have had a oneness of heart, a oneness of purpose, a oneness of spirit, with the Father and with the Son—a fellowship divine which cannot be produced by earthly creeds and fetters. So it is today, and so it is always between those who are truly the Lord's. They know each other not by outward passwords or grips or signs, but by the touch of faith and love which it gives and which each recognizes. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, in that ye have love one for another." "We know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." True, we love all men and seek to serve all as we have opportunity; but, as the Apostle explains, "especially the household of faith," especially those who love the Lord and are trusting in the precious blood, and are fully consecrated to him and, so far as they are able, doing his will and seeking to further know that will day by day.

This union between those who are the Lord's people is evidently not the union of person. The Lord's followers are not one in person but in spirit. And this is the illustration which the Lord gives of the oneness which exists between himself and the Father—they are not one in person but one in spirit, purpose, will; for our Lord declares that he always does the Father's will, those things which are pleasing in the Father's sight. And thus we abide in his love and abide in him by doing his will, which is the Father's will, and thus Father and Son and the Church, the Bride, are all one—in spirit and in truth.

With Christ, Sharing His Glory

Our Lord's words (v. 24), "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me go with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me." This is not a petition, but a declaration of the Lord's will, as though he were saying, Father, I understand that this is thy will in respect to these my followers, and I will it also, acquiescing in this great and liberal arrangement which thou hast made. I will be glad to have my followers ultimately on the same plane of glory with me, and that they may there be blessed by seeing and sharing the glories thou hast conferred upon me whom thou hast loved always even before the foundations of the world—even before the arrangements were made for these my disciples.

The closing words of the prayer are beautiful and give us an insight into the Lord's confidence in the Father and fellowship with him. He knew the Father, and so he has declared respecting us that this is the highest evidence that could be granted us of our acceptance with the Father and of our participation in the life eternal which he has provided, namely, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." Our Lord declares, "O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me." And I have made known unto them thy name, thy character, thy greatness, thy goodness, thy love, thy benefactions, and will make known still further as they are able to bear it, as they grow in knowledge of the Truth, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them and I in them.

How wonderful is this love of God and love of Christ! How impossible it seems for us to measure its lengths and breadths and heights and depths! Those who have accepted the Lord as their Redeemer and have entered into covenant relationship with him, giving him their little all and accepting from him a participation in all these blessings of his provision, if ever cast down because of weakness or opposition or what not, should call to mind this great love which the Father has for us and which the Son shares, the love which not only redeemed us while we were yet sinners, but which since then has called us to such wonderful blessings and privileges, making us joint-heirs with Christ our Lord, if so be we suffer with him;—this love will not be lightly turned away, this love would chasten us rather than permit us to fall away into the second death; this love will finally deliver, either in the little flock or in the great company, all who continue to trust in Jesus and continue to hold the faithful Word. But in proportion as this love of God dwells in us richly, in proportion as Christ is enthroned in our hearts, in that same proportion we will have a responsive love which will delight to do those things which are pleasing in our Father's sight and acceptable to our Lord, and in the same proportion we will be loth to do anything which would bring a cloud between the Lord and our souls. Let us, then, have fresh courage because of what we discern of the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of love divine, and let this love of God constrain us to greater zeal and devotion to him and to his cause. —Z. '05:136-140.

Be Strong and of Good Courage

Joshua 1:1-11.

Golden Text:—"I will not fall thee nor forsake thee."—Joshua 1:5.

JOSHUA, the divinely appointed leader after Moses' death, is calculated to have been eighty-three years old at the time. His name originally was Hoshea, the same as that of the prophet. The name signifies "Salvation" or "Help." Subsequently this was changed to Jehoshea (Numbers 13:16) which signifies "Jehovah is salvation." This was afterwards shortened to Joshua and later modified to Jeshua. Neh. 8:17.) The latter name in its Greek form in the Septuagint is Jesous, Jesus, the significant name given to our Lord at his birth. It is reasonable to infer that in some respects Joshua typified him.

Joshua was evidently a great man, although that greatness does not so much appear until after the death of Moses and his appointment as his successor. Previously, in harmony with the divine will and arrangement, his greatness was overshadowed by that of Moses, whom he served as general assistant, private secretary, etc. This training was evidently most valuable to him as a preparation for his future work. It made him familiar with the divine plans and methods as understood and practised by Moses, whose confidence he seems to have had in a remarkable degree. It will be remembered that to him was entrusted the command of the people in their first battle, in which they, unused to war, worsted the Amalekites by the Lord's providential assistance.

It was Joshua who went with Moses into Mount Sinai, it was he who led one of the companies of spies through the land of promise and who brought back a good report, and who courageously stood with Moses in advising that the people have faith in God and proceed to conquer and possess the promised land. He must have been either the oldest man in all the nation or next to the oldest, for only himself and Caleb of all the nation that were above twenty years of age at the exodus remained alive. In every way, therefore, Joshua was peculiarly fitted to be the Lord's servant in leading the Israelites into Canaan, and in every way he must have had the confidence of the people for such a position and service more than any other man in the world.

Joshua Divinely Commissioned

It was not sufficient that Moses had given Joshua a course of training preparing him for this service. It was necessary that the Lord, who proclaimed himself the real leader of Israel, should specially authorize Joshua to take command and to lead the people into Canaan. The intimation is that Joshua, like Moses, was a meek man, humble minded, and that instead of attempting to grasp authority he needed rather that the Lord should encourage him to undertake the responsibility of the position of leader. Happy would it be for all of the Lord's people if they were similarly meek and backward. All should criticize their own hearts and motives along these lines, and such as find in themselves an ambitious spirit should remember its dangers to themselves and to the Lord's people with whom they have to do, because the Lord resists the proud, the self-conscious, the boastful and ambitious, and shows his favor to the humble. The self-conscious need to be restrained, and cannot be permitted of the Lord to come so close to him nor to enter so fully into the secrets of the Lord as can those of more humble mind, who indeed need his encouraging words and gracious promises of assistance ere they could have strength and courage to proceed with his work. Realizing their own littleness and insufficiency and the greatness of the Lord and the importance of his work, these

"fear to touch
Things that involve so much."

The nation of Israel needed to be encouraged, because, although they had been forty years in preparation for this very event, still they realized that great difficulties stood before them. The river Jordan was to be crossed, and at this particular time it was swollen and large; the enemy, ready to repulse their advances was keen and on the alert and better used to warfare than they. If they should succeed in crossing the river in the face of their enemies it would appear to mean a great expenditure of energy and a great loss of life. They had no bridges nor pontoons from which to construct temporary bridges; and on the other side, if they ever reached it, they knew that the cities were strong walled, with a view to withstanding attacks and sieges, and they were comparatively unprepared as respects military equipment, battering rams, etc. What wonder if the people of Israel needed encouragement to undertake such a conflict—to take possession of the land which God had given them. The Lord began this work of encouragement by strengthening the heart of Joshua as the leader, by reminding him that he had promised the land, and assuring him that "every place that the sole of your foot shall tread, to you have I given it, as I spake unto Moses." Nevertheless this promise implied that nothing was theirs except as the soles of their feet claimed possession. It was theirs by faith in that promise—a faith that would lead to works. And is not this a general illustration of all of God's dealings with us of Spiritual Israel? He gives to us better promises, exceeding great and precious promises, but they are ours only in proportion as we take them and appropriate them and act upon them, and through such exercise of faith and obedience gain the desired strength and blessing.

Next the Lord outlined the promised land (v. 4), and practically gave the very boundaries which subsequently marked the possessions of Israel at the close of David's reign and throughout that of Solomon—from the Arabian wilderness on the south and Mount Lebanon to the river Euphrates on the north and the Mediterranean Sea on the west. This definiteness in statement of the boundaries would prove strengthening to faith, and would indicate to them clearly when they had attained possession of all that the Lord had given them. We may reasonably suppose that had their faith and courage been equal to the task they would have been capable of taking possession of that land promptly, but as it was they took possession of only a portion, and Amalekites and Canaanites still dwelt with them in the land and subsequently gave them trouble.

Some have used this as an illustration of how the Christian's full consecration means the surrender of everything to the Lord, that his Spirit and his will may have full control in our bodies and spirits, which are his. In proportion as we have faith and avail ourselves of the Lord's assistance we may equally take possession of our mortal bodies, and transfer our talents to the service of the Lord and his cause; but if through fear or sympathy with sin we permit the will of the flesh to dominate us here and there in this, that or the other affair of life, we will always have trouble in proportion. The sins and weaknesses which we fail to fight against will be sure eventually to fight against us and to injure us as New Creatures. Hence our consecration and our faith should be so full and so strong that we would fight a good fight against sin and meanness in every avenue of our natures and in our sentiments, at last bringing every power of our natures into captivity to God. In proportion as this new mind fails to take possession of the mortal body and to rule it, in that proportion will we be weak when we should be strong, troubled when we should have peace, overcharged and ensnared when we should have the full smile of God's favor. Not that we are advocating the thought of it being possible to reach actual perfection in the flesh, but that we do advocate as Scriptural the thought that we should have perfection of heart, of will, of intention, and that quite early in our Christian experience, and that only such as attain this are overcomers and may expect joint-heirship with the Lord in the coming Kingdom.

"I Will Be With Thee"

God's encouragement of Joshua was not along the lines common amongst men. He did not say to him, "Remember your age and long experience and previous successes as a general," etc., but he did give to him the better counsel, the assurance that as he had stood by Moses as his servant so he would be with him and would not forsake him and would not fail him in any hour of test and trouble. As a consequence of the Lord's assistance he was assured that no one would be able to withstand him all the days of his life, nor would any Israelite be permitted to occupy his place as the captain of the hosts during his lifetime.

Was it not thus with our Lord Jesus, too? And is not the Lord's message a similar one to all the members of the Body of Christ—"I will be with thee. I will not fail thee nor forsake thee"? In this let us rejoice while realizing that of ourselves we can do nothing. Remember the Master's words to the disciples returning joyful when they had been used in his service. When they recounted how in his name they had been able to heal the sick and even cast out devils the Lord said to them, Let not your rejoicing be on this account, but rather that your names are written in heaven—rejoice rather that your Father himself loveth you, that you have been accepted of him, and that he is on your part as you are enlisted in his service.

"Be Strong and of Good Courage"

Attention has been called to the fact that the Hebrew word here rendered strong is one which rather implies strength of the arms and of the shoulders, and thus gives the thought of aggressive warfare, while the word rendered courage has an association with the lower limbs and thus implies defensive or resistive power, steadfastness. So then the Lord exhorted Joshua to be strong, to have confidence,-to lay hold upon the blessings he and the Israelites were commissioned to take and to possess; and he urged him to be of good courage, to be firm in the resistance of opposition and very steadfast in the face of difficulties. And how much all the people of God today need to apply to themselves this same encouragement and to remember that Joshua and the Israelites and the promised land were merely foreshadowings of the greater and more wonderful antitypes. To us the Lord has given still greater blessings and promises. If the typical Joshua needed to be strong and firm, bold and courageous, what shall we say of the Spiritual Israelites, who must not only wrestle against the world and the flesh, but also, as the Apostle says, must contend with wicked spirits in influential positions?

How much strength and courage we must have if we would come off more than conquerors through him who loved us and bought us! And here is the point necessary to be remembered, viz., that this is not our battle but the Lord's, that we are not fighting at our own charges but with his commission and with his promised assistance and support. "I will be with thee, I will not fail thee nor forsake thee." No wonder that the Apostle, gaining a clear view of this situation, exclaimed, "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me." (Phil. 4:13.) And so it is with all the true followers of the Lord: we do not know how much we can accomplish, we do not know if there would be any limitations to our powers within the limits of the Lord's commands and while upheld by his promise. We must remember, however, the limitations. "Without me ye can do nothing," and again, that what we are to do is clearly indicated in the divine Word, and that we are not to look for nor expect divine aid beyond those limitations: just as in the case of Joshua and Natural Israel. Had they gone outside the boundaries of Canaan specified in the Lord's Word they could not have expected the divine assistance. Here again we remember the Master's words, "If ye abide in me and my words abide in you"—under these limitations we can do and be and pray anything and everything, but outside these limitations we must expect nothing.

Courage is always admirable, but there is a moral courage which should rank higher far than physical. This moral courage is greatly needed amongst the Lord's people; without it they can do nothing, and many of their difficulties in the Christian way are because they fail to appreciate this matter and fail to develop this courage. It requires real courage of the highest order to stand for the Lord's Truth and his people when these are misunderstood, misrepresented, antagonized. It takes real courage to stand for the light when the great Adversary with a worldwide influence brands it as darkness and leads an assault against it. It requires real courage to denounce the darkness, meekly, persistently, when it has on its side wealth, culture, influence and churchianity. . . .

Very Courageous to Observe the Law

There is a peculiar force in the language of the seventh verse of our lesson—"Only be strong and very courageous to observe and to do according to all the law which Moses my servant commanded thee." Whatever of strength and courage may be implied in the sixth verse as necessary to the conquering of the land of promise, this seventh verse evidently refers to moral courage—strong and very courageous in obedience to the divine commands. The injunction implied that Joshua would find obstacles and difficulties before him, and discouragements in respect to the observance of holy things. It is so with the Spiritual Israelites, the Body of Christ today: while some are lacking in courage as respects the outward things, a still larger number lack these qualities in their own hearts, in their own lives. They see and to some extent appreciate the divine will as being righteous altogether, but the self-denial necessary to a full obedience they are not willing to render. Perhaps the greatest battles any of us have to fight are those of which none may know except ourselves—our mental battles. As a Methodist brother once put the matter, "My greatest battle is to gain the consent of my own will." However, no Christian should be in this attitude. This should be our first battle—to gain the consent and full co-operation of our wills with the divine Word. Then let us go on to victory after victory, battling against the world, the flesh and the Adversary. Once our hearts are fully surrendered to his law it should never again be necessary to have a battle there; the victory should be so thorough, so complete, so far-reaching.

Meditating Day and Night on God's Law

The Lord explained to Joshua what would lie at the foundation of his success, and that neglect would mean his failure—"This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous and thou shalt make good success"—v. 8.

No clearer expression of the divine will could be made to the antitypical Joshua and the members of his Body than is given in this Scripture. Its teaching is that there is no safety, no real success for those addressed, except in obedience to the divine will, as recorded in the divine Word. Thus also the Lord Jesus is represented as saying, "I delight to do thy will, O my God; thy law is written in my heart"; and again prophetically—"O, how I love thy Law! It is my meditation all the day." (Psa. 40:8; 119:97.) Meditation on the divine law day and night is not, of course, to be understood literally—that we should do nothing else day or night than think upon the Scriptures. We are to understand the Lord to mean that we should ever have in mind, in connection with all of our life's affairs, the thought that we are his, and that he is our guide and director in all things, and that the slightest matter that would pertain to our lives and our interests, day or night, should be undertaken with due consideration of the Lord's will respecting the same.

In other words, as elsewhere expressed, whether we eat or drink or whatsoever we do, we should do all to the Lord's glory; and this implies not merely a haphazard wish to do the Lord's will, but a studying of the divine Word that we may know what that will is—not merely a studying of the creeds and traditions of the past, however we may honor those who made them and believe in their sincerity. It is for us rather to prove all things that we accept, and then to hold fast that which we have proven to be the good, the acceptable, the perfect will of God. As Joshua was told that his good success would be in proportion to his attention to the divine Law, so Spiritual Israelites similarly are informed that their success in making their calling and election sure will be proportionate to their loving, zealous obedience to the divine message. Meditating on the Lord's Law day and night implies a study of the Scriptures, a course which some of us at present are endeavoring to follow, using such helps as the Lord's providence has supplied to us—not relying upon any helps to the abandonment of the Word, but rather using these helps and proving everything received by the divine standard.

"Have I Not Commanded Thee?"

This question is asked by way of stimulating Joshua's thought—that he might realize that he had not commissioned himself nor been commissioned of man to undertake this great work. Similarly the Apostle points out that our Lord Jesus took not the honor upon himself to be the High Priest of our profession, but that he was called of God to this position. Similarly, also, we who are seeking to walk in the footsteps of Jesus are to consider that we have not chosen him but he has chosen us, commissioned us and authorized us, so that we can go forth in his name as ambassadors for him and the Kingdom which he represents. What strength and courage this gives to the true soldier of the cross—to realize that his labor is not in vain in the Lord. How it nerves him to be and to do in harmony with the Word and Spirit of his Master.

No wonder that these are in the Scriptures termed "more than conquerors." And no wonder, either, that the Lord has made the conditions of their present experiences such as to necessitate a good fight and a victory. He seeketh such, strong, courageous—not in themselves, but in the power of his might and through faith. As soon as Joshua got this message from the Lord he proceeded to put the people in order for an aggressive campaign, and instructed the proper officers to prepare the people and to prepare victuals and to be ready within three days to obey the divine command to enter in and possess the land which the Lord had given them. The promptness and zeal here displayed are worthy of emulation. We may be sure that, as we read, "The Lord loveth a cheerful giver," so he loveth those who are prompt and energetic in everything they undertake to be and to do for him and his cause. Let us who are members of the greater Joshua, the antitype, be very courageous also, very prompt, very zealous, that we may be used and useful more and more in the Master's service.—Z. '07:281-284.

A Remarkable Friendship

I Samuel 20:12-23.

Golden Text:—"There is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother."—Prov. 18:24.

HISTORY relates many instances of intense friendships between great men in ancient times, but it tells us of none surpassing the friendship between Jonathan and David, referred to in this lesson. Jonathan's love for David, evidently thoroughly reciprocated by the latter, shines out not only as a friendship that was unselfish, but as one that was apparently injurious to Jonathan's interests—though not really so.

As the son of King Saul, Jonathan was the recognized heir to the throne of Israel, and was at this time about thirty-five years of age. David, the country youth of about twenty-one years of age, had suddenly sprung into prominence before the nation, had been appointed a captain of a thousand men, and was just recently married to Saul's daughter. Saul himself viewed David as a rival in the affections of the people, and everything foreboded that some day he would be Saul's successor. From the standpoint of fallen manhood, therefore, Jonathan had every reason to consider David an opponent and rival, and the envy and jealousy of the fallen nature might be expected to breed in Jonathan's heart hatred and enmity instead of friendship and love. These circumstances constitute the remarkable friendship between these two young men one of the most wonderful on the pages of history.

We read of how Jonathan's soul was knit unto the soul of David—their affections, confidences and loves were interwoven. Jonathan giving to David certain parts of his own apparel when the latter came to live at the court of Saul, was merely an outward manifestation of the other precious sentiments which prompted this and other manifestations of affection—all of which, dignifying David and promoting his honor, were derogatory to the natural interests of Jonathan, who, as the heir apparent, might not improperly have aspired to the maintenance of his own place of honor at the court. Small minds are apt to make the mistake of supposing that the crushing down of others is essential to their own honor and exaltation; but it was because Jonathan was not thus small-minded, but noble-hearted, that his character has been beloved by all who have known it from then until now.

There is a reason for everything, and there must have been a reason for this love between these two noble souls. We are to love and esteem whatsoever things are just, true, pure, noble, honorable, says the Apostle, which implies that the love of the reverse of these would be improper. True, there is a difference between loving principles of righteousness and goodness and loving individuals, but what we wish to notice is that the love for individuals should be based upon their possession of noble and loveworthy characters. Neither of these men could have loved the other had he been bad, ignoble; for only the mean can love the mean, and only the perverse can love the perverse.

What was there in David's character that attracted Jonathan's love? Undoubtedly it was his nobility, his courage, his honesty, his faithfulness to the king and to the nation, and, above all, his trust in God, his reliance on him. What was there in Jonathan which drew forth the responsive love of David? There were many of the same qualities: Jonathan was also courageous and had already demonstrated this; he was sincere, honest, humble-minded, generous, faithful to a friend, and above all faithful to his God.—1 Sam. 14:1-15, 27-30, 43; 23:16-18.

While these two men had certain natural qualities of heart which commended each to the other's love, the great bond of union was the faith and devotion of each to God. Some one has said that those who would be the best friends need a third object in which both are interested, and that then, like the radii of a circle, the nearer they come to this center the nearer they approach to one another. So with these men: their loyalty to God and to the principles of truth and righteousness exemplified in God, was the strong bond of their friendship which hindered the diversity of their earthly interests from alienating their affections.

This same principle is exemplified in all true, unselfish love: there must be something mutually attractive to draw and to hold the interest and love of each to the other. The breaking of vows of love and friendship or the breaking of marriage vows implies that one or other had a selfish love and not a pure love, which the Lord's Word inculcates and which is so nobly illustrated in this lesson. Selfish love may indeed admire that which is brilliant, that which is good, that which is noble, that which is generous; but not being equally noble and generous, it will be sure at some time to be assaulted with the temptation to abandon the friendship where it believes it could better serve its own interests. Jonathan's love was not of this selfish kind, consequently it was unchangeable—indeed, grew the firmer and the stronger in proportion as it triumphed over the propositions of any selfish suggestions. In this respect it well represents the love of our Lord Jesus for his people. As Jonathan loved David at the cost of his own position, our Lord Jesus left the glory which he had with the Father that he might become the Redeemer of his people, to whom he declares, "Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you."

"One there is above all others
Well deserves the name of friend;
His is love beyond a brother's,
Costly, free, and knows no end."

Our lesson introduces these two friends at a time when the life of David was in danger. Saul was disposed to do violence to David. . . . And finally the javelin was thrown at his musician David, but the latter escaped it. It was in view of this hostile feeling that these friends decided that it would be unwise for David to again appear at court unless King Saul manifested some change of mind toward him. The coming feast would be an important one; Jonathan and others of the household would be present, but it was not considered prudent that David should hazard his life by attending, and it was arranged that Jonathan should make his excuses to the king and should subsequently let David know the king's attitude of mind, so that if necessary he should flee out of the country. Jonathan found Saul full of bitterness of heart toward David, so much so that he was angered at his son for making excuses for him and threw his javelin at him as an evidence of his displeasure, though probably not with the intention of killing him. Jonathan resented the indignities and wrong of his father, and at once communicated the matter to David by the prearranged signal related in this lesson. However, the two friends could not part without a personal interview, in which they kissed each other, and wept, and bound each other in promises, and called upon God to witness the sincerity of their devotion to each other. Jonathan was evidently fully convinced that David was the Lord's choice for a king to succeed Saul, and, being full of faith and devotion to God, he had not the slightest thought of opposing the divine arrangement. Quite probably, too, in their confidences, David had already told Jonathan of his anointing, assuring him, however, that he would not consider this anointing a proper excuse or ground for any interference with King Saul; that on the contrary, as the Lord had sought him and anointed him, the Lord himself was able in his own due time and in his own way to instal him in authority and power without his stretching forth his hand to do injury to one who already had been anointed of the Lord to this office of king.

We have already noticed that friendship implies like qualities of mind and of heart. The generous love the generous, the noble love the noble, the honest love the honest, the meek love the meek, etc.;

but now we call attention to the fact that amongst the Lord's people are not many great, wise or noble—naturally speaking—and that God loves and accepts as his covenant people, friends, children, chiefly those who are not noble by nature. We notice also a love and friendship amongst the Lord's consecrated people stronger and deeper than any earthly tie or relationship—notwithstanding the fact that amongst the Lord's people are "not many great or noble," but chiefly the poor of this world, rich in faith. How comes this seeming contradiction of a general rule of friendship? We reply that God's love toward us as sinners was not that of friendship but of compassion, and similarly the love of his people for sinners is not that of friendship but of compassion, sympathy, the desire to help them out of their degradation. Not until after we had ceased to be sinners, through acceptance of Christ, were we privileged to become the friends of God and to realize him as our friend. Not until we had ceased to be sinners, and had been accepted in the Beloved, would we become the friends of others similarly transformed, and begin to grow in this quality of friendship—love for one another as brethren, partakers of the holy Spirit.

10 In a word there are two planes of friendship—a natural plane, on which men of like natural qualities would be drawn together; and a spiritual plane, on which those unlike in natural qualities, but alike in spiritual hopes, aims and ambitions, are drawn still more closely together by the new tie, the new love, which binds not their flesh but their hearts in Christian love and unity.

11 These New Creatures in Christ Jesus know each other not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. In each other's spirits or new minds there are the noblest sentiments, the highest aspirations, that which is good, true, noble, pure—whatever may be their weaknesses according to the flesh. They love each other from the new standpoint of intention, will, harmony with God, and their friendship for one another grows increasingly as they perceive each other's energy in fighting the good fight of faith against the evil influences of the world, the flesh and the Adversary. Nor tongue nor pen can properly express the love, the friendship, which subsists between these New Creatures in Christ Jesus, to whom old things have passed away and all things have become new. 7 Sept

This does not signify, however, that a parent must have exactly the same love for other children as for his own;—he has a greater responsibility for his own, and should realize it. Nor does it imply that even the saints will all be loved to the same degree. Our Lord, we are told, specially loved some of his disciples. By and by, when perfection shall have replaced imperfection, all "brethren" will be perfect and all neighbors will be brethren beloved. Until then, however, we must love all, but "making a difference"—according to natural obligations and spiritual development.—Jude 22.

As there are nominal Christians and real Christians, so there is a nominal love as well as a real love amongst those who profess the name of Christ, and it should be more and more the aim of the Lord's true people to cultivate his spirit, his character, his disposition, his love, his friendship; and that they may be able to cultivate these he has caused the Apostle to present to our attention a most graphic description of the love which is from above. This description is given in 1 Cor. 13. It must be enjoyed to some extent by all who are New Creatures, for if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his; but it will be increasingly enjoyed and appreciatingly understood in proportion as the Lord's people each become stronger in the Lord—copies of God's dear Son—like him who is the friend above all others.

One writer says, "The glory of life is to love, not to be loved; to give, not to get; to serve, not to be served. . . . The self-centered cannot keep friends even when he makes them."

Another remarks, "Behold, what gross errors and extreme absurdities many do commit for want of a friend to tell him of them."

"True criticism does not consist, as so many critics seem to think, in depreciating but in appreciation. More lives are spoiled by undue harshness than by undue gentleness."

"The centered love of any one person tends toward universal good-will, the love of all. The candle not only shines on him who lights it, but on all within reach of its rays."

"Every power for good in true friendship is a power for evil in the false.

" 'Was it friend or foe that spread these lies!
Nay, who but infants question in such wise?
'Twas one of my most intimate enemies.' "

—Z. '03: 332-334.

Keep Thy Tongue from Evil

James 3:1-13.

"Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile."—Psa. 34:13.

"BE NOT many teachers, my brethren, knowing that we shall receive heavier judgment" (Revised Version). Thus the Apostle indicates that what he has to say concerning the great influence of the tongue is directed largely to those amongst believers who attempt to be teachers; who have a greater responsibility than if they were not teachers. It is not his wish to deter those who have ability, a gift in this direction, but rather to caution all as to the responsibility of the position they thus take. If they possess an eloquent tongue it may be a channel for a great blessing. . . . or, on the other hand, if contaminated with error, the tongue can do almost untellable harm—injury to faith, to morals, to good works. It is indeed true, that whoever exercises the gift of teaching lays himself open to increased responsibility in the sight of God and men.—See Matt. 5:19; Rom. 2:20, 21; 1 Pet. 5:3; Titus 1:11; 1 Tim. 1:7; 2 Tim. 4:3; 2 Pet. 2:1.

The warning in this lesson is not against the tongue itself, but against the power which we exercise upon others by the use of our tongues. Probably every person of experience will fully agree with the statement that the tongue is potent in its influence beyond any other member of the body, for either good or evil. Experience teaches also that with the vast majority it is easier to control any other organ than the tongue. So skilful a servant is it that every ambition and passion and inclination of the fallen nature seeks to use it as a servant or channel for evil. It requires, therefore, on the part of the Christian, increased vigilance, wisdom and care so to govern this member of his body and bring it into subjection to the new mind in Christ, that it shall be, not a hindrance to himself or to others, but, on the contrary, a help in the narrow way. As the bit in the horse's mouth will move and control his strength, and as the small rudder to a vessel will direct or change its course, so the tongue and the pen, its representative, may influence and turn about large numbers of people, for good or ill. How important, therefore, is the tongue, and how much more frequently do we find it employed as an agency for evil than as an agency for good, to pull down the faith rather than to build up the faith, to implant seeds of discord and discontent rather than those which will produce righteousness and peace! While this is specially true in the worldly, it is true to a considerable extent amongst God's people; and **each should remember that to some extent he is a teacher, and day by day is either forwarding or hindering the cause of truth, righteousness and peace.**

In the unregenerate world the tongue is indeed a "fire" causing no end of burning of wrath, envy, hatred, strife and everything that defileth the entire body, stimulating all the fallen passions and desires. No wonder the apostle declares figuratively that the tongue itself seems to be set on fire of gehenna—the second death. Its burning not only tends to bring its master but others to destruction.

In the statement, "Therewith bless we God, even the Father, and therewith curse we men, which are made in the likeness of God," we should not understand the writer to refer to himself and to the Church as using their tongues for such unholy purposes, but as speaking for the whole world, some use the tongue to praise God and some use it to blaspheme his holy name and to curse their fellow creatures. It is a willing servant in whatever direction it is guided; and hence the importance of having so important a servant and member rightly guided. Apparently, however, there were some in the Church who out of the same mouth rendered thanks to God and curses to fellow creatures—perhaps not often curses in the ordinary acceptation of the term, but curses in the sense of injurious words, which would lead to a baneful or cursed or evil condition; for every false teaching is a curse to those who receive it. In this sense of the word at least, many out of the same mouth send forth both good and evil influences. This is a wrong condition, and hence the importance of the warning, "My brethren, be not many teachers." Whoever would be a fountain from which would go forth the divine Word, carrying blessing and refreshment and strength, should see to it that bitter waters, false doctrines that would cause a curse, an injury—dishonoring God and perverting his Word—should not find in them a channel of utterance.

In the choice of leaders for meetings the "tongue" qualification, as here laid down should not be overlooked. The **fiery tongued** should not be chosen, but the meeker, the moderate, who "bridle" their tongues and endeavor carefully to "speak as the oracles of God" only. Such tongues **constrain,** while others more frequently wound and repel. The Word of the Lord is quick and powerful and **sharp** and cuts "to the heart" without bitter and acrimonious and uncharitable human expletives to enforce it. Hence the divine instruction that we "speak the truth in love."

The lesson closes with an exhortation to those who have the qualifications of teachers in the Church (wisdom and knowledge) to manifest themselves not merely by words and teachings, but also by godly lives and good works in meekness of wisdom.

While this lesson is pointed specially toward "teachers," it should be regarded by all. It is an old and true saying that "Kind words can never die." and it would be equally true to say, "Unkind words never die." Indeed, the latter live much the longer in a majority of cases—in worldly hearts especially. Let us each and all redouble our energy in subjugating our tongues, that they may always bless and "minister grace to the hearers."—Read Eph. 4:29; Z. '97:156.

◆

As the Truth makes us free and opens the eyes of our understanding, it enables us to see our own imperfections and the imperfections of the brethren and of the world more clearly than ever. Unless there be a large amount of love, this will mean a disposition to find fault, to criticize.

We may safely give ourselves considerable liberty along these lines in dealing with our own character. We may find fault with ourselves and criticize ourselves often to advantage. Yet even this should not be carried so far that we forget the Lord's gracious promise that He will judge us according to our heart intentions and not according to our imperfect attainments. We are, perhaps, better able to appreciate our own shortcomings, and how they were unintentional; but when the shortcomings are those of others, it tests our love, patience, brotherly-kindness, meekness, gentleness, etc. Yet such testings are very profitable. We pray that the Lord will assist us in growing in the graces of the Holy Spirit. Let us remember that the only way to assist us would be by giving us testings along these very lines. Our strength of character, our development in these graces, will be in proportion as we receive these testings in the proper spirit.—Z. '13:339.

◆

The Christian is to be ready to do good to all men at the expense of his own time and convenience, but he is to be ready to **lay down his life for the brethren.** He is to seek opportunities for laying down his life day after day.—Z. '13:358.

First, Second and Third-Class Sufferings

First Class Sufferings

OF THE first class were the sufferings of Christ—his weariness, weakness, bloody sweat, ignominious buffetings, and all the reproaches and sneers, and bitter words, to which he meekly and quietly submitted until the sufferings of Calvary terminated his human existence. Of this first class were also the wounds of Paul and Silas, when scourged for preaching Christ, when stoned, beaten and imprisoned, and when in perils by sea and by land, among the Jews and among false brethren. Of this class was also the dyspepsia of Timothy, who, probably not naturally strong, studied and labored for the Lord, and in the interest of the church; and such we are distinctly told was the cause of the sickness of Epaphroditus, of whose sickness Paul writes, saying, "Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness; and hold such in reputation: **because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death,** not regarding [sparing] his life, to supply your deficiency."—Phil. 2:29, 30.

Yes, indeed, these and all such sicknesses and scars and wounds are honorable marks of distinction, which each soldier of the cross should be ambitious to bear, as Paul said referring to injuries endured in the service of the truth, "I bear about in my body **the marks** of the Lord Jesus." These he had received, not in money-seeking or fame-seeking, nor in self-indulgence, nor in quarreling and disputing about the loss and dross of earth, but in the good fight of faith; in contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, against error amongst Jewish friends, and against philosophies and sciences falsely so called. He endured his wounds and tribulations in telling the glad tidings of the gospel of Christ of which he was not ashamed, and holding up the cross of Christ—to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, but to us who believe the power of God and the wisdom of God.

All the "overcomers,' all the faithful in Christ Jesus, are likely to have some such scars as proofs of their faithful endurance. There is no escape in this war. It is war to the death with all as well as with our Head and Captain, and the first loyal soldiers in our army. And it is in this view that Rev. 20:4 represents all those who shall be accounted worthy of the first resurrection as being "beheaded." (The beheading is symbolic; for neither our Lord nor the apostles were literally beheaded. It signifies that all must suffer earthly disadvantages, and lay down their lives in the defence and service of the truth, if they shall be worthy to share Christ's glory.) All suffering for righteousness' sake is suffering for the truth. Our daily lives are to be "living epistles known and read of all men;" and if we suffer because we refuse to be conformed to this world, or because we give the testimony of our lives against sin and for holiness, we suffer for the truth's sake. If your talents and opportunities permit no more active service for the truth than such godly living and suffering therefor, rejoice! and reckon that yours are among the first class sufferings, and let patience do her perfect work of moulding your character by this means to our Lord's likeness.

The Apostle tells us also of a "fellowship of suffering" which may be experienced through mental sympathy. Those who cannot suffer personally and physically for the truth can sympathize with those who have such sufferings and can thus become "partakers," sustaining, encouraging and upholding those who are in the "great fight of affliction" for the Lord's cause, by their words, faith and prayers. Notice the promise to such in the Apostle's words in Heb. 6:10.

Sickness and discomfort of any sort, incurred by our energy in the service of the truth, are permitted by our Father as evidences of our fidelity and love; because if not liable to such tribulations, or if relieved of them instantly by a miracle, the Lord's service would cost us no sacrifice and the test of our willingness to endure for the truth's sake would be wanting. As it is, however, every ache and pain or wound of person or of feelings, and beheading socially or literally **for the truth's sake,** becomes a witness of the spirit, testifying to our faithfulness. And in all such tribulations we should rejoice greatly—as say our Lord and the Apostle Peter. —Luke 6:22, 23; 1 Pet. 4:13-16.

Second Class Sufferings

Of the second class of sickness and afflictions are poverty, constitutional weaknesses, etc., which, like Paul's sore eyes, the Heavenly Father sees will be really advantageous to us. For he doubtless often sees better than we how weak we are, and how a little adversity is necessary, as ballast, to keep our poorly balanced little vessels from capsizing. These weaknesses God sees best to leave us under, but assures us, through Paul, of "grace sufficient" to counterbalance such weaknesses. A realization of such care for our real interests, while humiliating, in that it forces conviction of our weakness, is refreshing and inspiring, in that it proves our Father's love and care.

Third Class Sufferings

The third class includes chiefly such afflictions as God visits upon his children as special chastisements for special transgressions. These are mentioned in Heb. 12:5-11. "Son, despise not thou the discipline of the Lord, nor faint when thou art reproved by him; for whom the Lord loveth he disciplineth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure discipline, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father disciplineth not? But if ye be without discipline whereof all are partakers, then are ye spurious and not [real] sons. . . . Now, no discipline for the present seemeth joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness unto them which are [properly] exercised [or trained] thereby." This description, it will be observed, covers not merely the reproofs or rebukes of the Lord (verse 5), of the unfaithful and wanderers and transgressors, but also the disciplinary trials which come to us in well doing, and are permitted for the developing and strengthening of character; —hence both second and third class sufferings.

It is only the rebukes and reproofs of the Lord for sin and unfaithfulness that we are examining in this third class of afflictions. We remark, too, that probably every son, except the one perfect one, our Lord Jesus, has at times needed and received rebukes by afflictions, for unfaithfulness. And it is well that we should learn to recognize these rebukes and to wisely apply their lessons. . . .

While some, humble minded, do not readily recognize any sufferings as endured for the Lord's sake, and need to be encouraged along this line, others who do little and suffer little from any cause, imagine themselves martyrs for the truth. Let us avoid both extremes and think of ourselves soberly, underestimating rather than overestimating our little services and sacrifices.

But if we see no evidence that our afflictions have resulted either directly or indirectly from our zeal in the Lord's service, we should at once seek for a cause of the afflictions as a rebuke from the Lord, remembering that nothing could happen to us aside from our Father's permission, and that he never permits them except for a wise purpose. . . .

The general object of many afflictions is our discipline and reformation; and happy is the son who shall speedily note a rebuke of the Father, and repent and come back quickly into full harmony; and who, exercised thereby, shall seldom need the rebuking rod of affliction.—Z. '96:165-167.

"Truth is Stranger than Fiction"

Perils Among False Brethren—2 Cor. 11:26.

OUR Christian experiences differ: no two have exactly the same, because our temperaments and talents differ as well as our surroundings. But we may rely upon it that no real son of God is exempted from the needed trials of patience, faith and love. No matter how strong the character, or how seemingly impregnable to the ordinary besetments, we may rely upon it that such have as great trials and crosses as others—perhaps greater; perhaps such as would prostrate weaker ones, whom the Lord will therefore in love and mercy not suffer to be tempted above that they are able to bear.—1 Cor. 10:13.

Even our blessed Lord Jesus, though perfect, had to pass through an experience to test and prove his complete submission to the Father's will. Looking at our Lord's testing, we cannot doubt that his strong character was measurably unmoved by the sarcastic, bitter words and threats of the Scribes and Pharisees, and that likewise he speedily and firmly settled Satan's temptations negatively. None of these things, which would have been the greatest temptations to others, seemed to move or even to greatly annoy him. He answered coolly and often ironically the attacks of open enemies, and was comparatively unmoved by them; but it was when those who dipped in the dish with him lifted up the heel against him (Psa. 41:9; Matt. 26:23) and left him, that his heart was troubled;—wounded by professed friends. The only discouraged expression recorded, relative to his work, was toward the close of his ministry when the test became more and more severe, and "many went back and walked no more in his company," saying of his doctrines, "This is a hard saying; who can hear it?" His unreproachful but sorrowful words, then expressed to the twelve specially staunch disciples, were full of pathos and disappointed grief: "Will ye also go away?" The prompt response of Peter—"Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of lasting life,"—must certainly have come as a comforting balm to that noble, loving heart, whose only impulse was to do good and to bless others.

And yet as he approached the close of his ministry, the time came that he must still further suffer wounds from those he most loved. No wonder that, catching a clear view of how his sacrifice was to be completed, how all his bosom disciples would forsake and disown him, and how one of them would betray him with a kiss, he was sorrowful, troubled in spirit, and testified, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me." And though Peter courageously said, "Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee"—and so said they all—Jesus saw that all would be scattered, forsaking him in his most trying hour, and that courageous Peter would be so terribly sifted of Satan and prove so weak that he would even swear that he had never known him. Truly these trials from "brethren," some of whom were only weak, and one false at heart, must have been among the sorest of our Lord's experiences, during his period of trial. Yet none of these things moved him or for a moment influenced him to choose another course. He cheerfully followed the narrow path and left it for God, in his own time, to bring forth his righteousness as the light of noonday. (Psa. 37:6.) He was obedient to God and faithful to the truth, and it was thus that he suffered, not only at the hands of evil men, but also from the misunderstandings of his closest friends, who did not clearly grasp the situation, nor see how needful it was that he should first be Redeemer before he could become Restorer and King.

The same lesson of perils among false brethren, and among brethren who had not so fully as himself grasped the truth, was also the Apostle Paul's experience.

We never hear from him a complaint about the way the world rejected his message, spoke evil of him and maltreated him as the leading exponent of the unpopular doctrine of the cross of Christ, which was opposed both by the stumbling, blinded Jews and by the worldly-wise believers in the philosophies of the Gentiles. Indeed, instead of being downcast or discouraged at his past experiences, or in the prospect of bonds and imprisonments awaiting him in the future, he boldly and cheerfully declared, "But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself."—Acts 20:19-24.

But, like the Lord Jesus, Paul had his severest trials from "false brethren;" who, instead of being faithful yoke-fellows and co-workers, as good soldiers of the cross, became puffed up, heady, and anxious to be leaders. These, being unwilling or unable to see the truth as fully and clearly as did Paul, because of their wrong condition of heart, and being envious of his success and the results of his zeal and labor, followed after him in the various cities where he had labored, and by misrepresentation of his **character** as well as of his teachings, sought to lower him in the esteem of the household of faith, and thus to open the way for various sophistical theories which would reflect honor upon them as teachers of what they claimed were **advanced truths,** though actually subverting the real truth in the minds of many.

The only annoyance ever manifested by the Apostle Paul, in any of his letters, was upon this subject of his misrepresentation by false brethren. Referring to these false apostles by name, that they might be known and recognized as such (See 1 Tim. 1:19, 20; 2 Tim. 4:10, 14-17; 2 Cor. 11:2-23), he clearly exposed their unholy motives of pride, ambition and envy, which scrupled not to make havoc of the Church and of the truth. Especially did he point out that, in their attempt to be leaders, they had manufactured a different **gospel,** built upon a different foundation than the only true foundation—the death of Christ as man's ransom-price.

Paul was zealous for the truth's sake, lest these false apostles should use smooth words and misrepresentations of his character and of the truth as a lever to turn men aside from the true gospel.

He warns them against those teachers, not to keep himself uppermost in their hearts, but to put them on their guard, lest receiving the new teachers, they should be injured by the **false** teachings they presented, and lest in rejecting him and losing confidence in him as an honest and true man and teacher they should discard his teachings, which were the truth. Hence his reference to himself was not in self-defence and self-laudation, but in defence of **the truth,** and an endeavor to have them see that his character and career as a true teacher comported well with the true message he bore to them.

And he fearlessly pointed out that men might **claim to present** the same Jesus, the same spirit and the same gospel, and yet be false teachers and deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And, he says, marvel not at such a thing as that men should be great workers in the name of Christ from ambitious motives: "No marvel, for Satan himself fashioneth himself into an angel of light. It is no great thing, therefore, if his ministers also transform themselves as ministers of righteousness."

Paul's letter to the Galatians was written evidently to counteract the misrepresentations of false brethren. (Gal. 1:6; 3:1.) To re-establish confidence in the gospel message he had delivered, it was needful that he should rehearse to them something of his history. In doing so it was necessary to refer again to the **false** brethren (Gal. 2:4), who claimed to be of the same body and who yet, in opposition to the truth, brought again upon God's children the bondage of errors already escaped from.

HARVEST GATHERING AND SIFTINGS

A Sketch of the Development of Present Truth

Many are the inquiries relative to the truths presented in Millennial Dawn and Zion's Watch Tower, as to whence they came and how they developed to their present symmetrical and beautiful proportions—Were they the results of visions? Did God in any supernatural way grant the solution of these hitherto mysteries of his plan? Are the writers more than ordinary beings? Do they claim any supernatural wisdom or power? or how comes this revelation of God's truth?

No, dear friends, I claim nothing of superiority, nor supernatural power, dignity or authority; nor do I aspire to exalt myself in the estimation of my brethren of the household of faith, except in the sense that the Master urged it, saying, "Let him who would be great among you be your servant." (Matt. 20:27.) And my position among men of the world and of the nominal church is certainly far from exalted, being "everywhere spoken against." I am fully contented, however, to wait for exaltation until the Lord's due time. (1 Pet. 5:6.) In the Apostle's words I therefore answer, "Why look ye upon us, as though by our own power we had done these things? We also are men of like passions with yourselves"—of like infirmities and frailties, earnestly striving, by overcoming many besetments, discouragements, etc., to press along the line toward the mark of the prize of our high calling, and claiming only, as a faithful student of the Word of God, to be an index finger, as I have previously expressed it, to help you to trace for yourselves, on the sacred page, the wonderful plan of God—no less wonderful to me, I assure you, than to you, dearly beloved sharers of my faith and joy.

No, the truths I present, as God's mouthpiece, were not revealed in visions or dreams, nor by God's audible voice, nor all at once, but gradually, especially since 1870, and particularly since 1880. Neither is this clear unfolding of truth due to any human ingenuity or acuteness of perception, but to the simple fact that God's due time has come; and if I did not speak, and no other agent could be found, the very stones would cry out.

The following history is given not merely because I have been urged to give a review of God's leadings in the path of light, but specially because I believe it to be needful that the truth be modestly told, that misapprehensions and prejudicial misstatements may be disarmed, and that our readers may see how hitherto the Lord has helped and guided. In so far as the names and views of others, who have parted our company, may be associated with this history, I shall endeavor to bring forward only such points as are necessary to an understanding of our position and of the Lord's leadings. Nor can I name all the little points of divine favor in which faith was tested, prayers were answered, etc., remembering that our Master and the early Church left no such example of boasting faith, but rather admonished otherwise, saying, "Hast thou faith? have it to thyself." Some of the most precious experiences of faith and prayer are those which are too sacred for public display.—Z. '06:228, 229.

(Continued in O.C.G. No. 78.)

KERNELS KERNELS KERNELS

We see why David was described as a man after God's own heart. His sins were not pleasing to God—quite the reverse; but the after appreciation of the enormity of the sins and the hearty repentance therefor to the Lord, and the desire to be cleansed from every evil way, were pleasing to the Lord. Here we have an illustration of how all things may work together for good to those who love God. By reason of his heart-loyalty to the Lord, and the principles of righteousness, his terrible sins resulted in bringing a great blessing to David's own heart—humbling him—giving him an appreciation of his weakness and littleness, and of his need to abide close to the Lord, if he would have the Lord's fellowship and compassion and be safe from the temptations of his own fallen flesh. So too, with the New Creation. How many of them have realized profitable lessons and blessings out of some of their stumblings—not that the stumblings were good nor of the Lord, but that the Lord was able to overrule such circumstances for good to those who are of the proper mind—rightly exercised by them to repentance and reformation.—Z. '03:381.

◆

Whoever has not seen his need of making resolutions, making vows to the Lord, has not recognized the first principle of Christian development. He who finds from the Enemy's attack where his wall is weakest, and who then repairs the weak places as quickly as ascertained, does so by resolution to the Lord—by vows. He who has not discovered any weaknesses in his character is duly blind and "cannot see afar off." He who has not attempted to correct his weaknesses by resolutions to the Lord, vows to the Lord, has not yet begun that character development which must be completed before he can be pronounced an overcomer.—Z. '09:76.

◆

No member of the body of Christ can say that he has no need for another member, and no member may say that there is nothing whatever that he can do in the service of the body. Under the guidance of our glorious Head each member who is filled with his spirit, and desirous of serving him, may do so. When the time for rewards will come, who knows how much of the usefulness of Paul and Apollos may be accredited to some of the humble ones such as Aquila and Priscilla, who in various ways ministered to and encouraged and supported their abler brethren in the Lord's work.—Z. '03:59.

◆

The seeds of today will bring forth fruitage by and by, whether they be good seeds of kind words, gentleness, meekness, patience, helpfulness, or evil words and evil conduct, backbiting, slandering and evil doing. Every act, every word, every look, every thought is a seed, and will bring its results in our own minds and hearts and conduct.—Z. '06:140.

◆

Let us count it a privilege to void our rights, if thus we can glorify God and bless our fellows.—Z. '09:348.

True, godly living and a heart at peace with the Lord are very conducive to physical health, but it is also true that to be instant in season and out of season in the service of the King will mean a considerable amount of wear and tear, physically, and imply a measure of physical discomfort at times, and this injury in one way or another should be considered as a part of our sacrifice, a part of the "all things" of our experience which God is able to overrule to our profit.—Z. '06:60.

◆

After Elijah had reached the wilderness, there was an inclination on his part to feel discouraged; and he said, "Ah, Lord God! . . ."—this signifying his discouragement. But the Lord strengthened him and gave him a special food, in the strength of which he went to Mt. Horeb. This mountain represents the Kingdom of God, the Messianic Kingdom. And we believe that by this spiritual food we are now brought to the time when the Kingdom is to be established.—Z. '15:46.

◆

Do we not frequently desire to reassure ourselves of the Lord's favor and of our continued relationship to Him as New Creatures, passed from death unto life? If we do, here is the text, the application of which, if we are in the right condition, should bring peace and joy. And if we are in the wrong condition, it should bring alarm for our personal safety as New Creatures. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." —1 John 3:14; Z. '13:339.

◆

If the power of God was sufficient to quicken and energize the dead body of Jesus, surely he is able as well as willing to make it sufficient for us—to give us the victory over our flesh to the extent that sin need not reign in (dominate) our mortal bodies, but instead we, as New Creatures, will be able to use them more and more efficiently in the service of our Lord, to whom we have pledged our all.—Z. '07:4.

◆

We may never become entirely satisfactory to ourselves in thought, word and deed while in the flesh; and we may never, therefore, be entirely satisfactory either to others; but we can, we should, we must, and by the grace of God let us each resolve that we will, attain to all of this so far as our hearts are concerned. Nothing short of this will be satisfactory to our Lord, to whom we are "betrothed" as members of the chaste, virgin Church.—Z. '09:255.

◆

The grace and beauty of the children of Messiah, partakers of human Restitution blessings (Acts 3:19-21), will be marvelous. They will attain to more than Adamic perfection, for they will have an increase of knowledge.—Z. '11:59.

◆

Nothing ever drew from our Lord such commendation as the exercise of a supreme faith.—Z. '06:170.

Old Corn Gems

NUMBER SEVENTY-EIGHT

"And they did eat of the OLD CORN of the land on the morrow after the Passover . . . and the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the OLD CORN of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year." Joshua 5:11-12.

A SAFE RULE

"WHERE A BROTHER GIVES AN INTERPRETATION OF A SCRIPTURE WHICH DIFFERS FROM THAT GIVEN BY BROTHER RUSSELL, AND BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION SEEMS REASONABLE AND IN HARMONY WITH THE PLAN OF GOD, THEN WE BELIEVE IT A SAFE RULE TO FOLLOW BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION, FOR THE REASON THAT HE IS THE SERVANT OF THE CHURCH, SO CONSTITUTED BY THE LORD FOR THE LAODICEAN PERIOD; AND THEREFORE WE SHOULD EXPECT THE LORD TO TEACH US THROUGH HIM. WHERE THERE ARISES A DOUBT IN THE MIND AS TO WHICH INTERPRETATION IS CORRECT, THEN IT IS ALWAYS SAFER TO RESOLVE THAT DOUBT IN FAVOR OF BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION. WE BELIEVE SUCH TO BE IN HARMONY WITH THE LORD'S WILL." Z. '18:51.

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Our "Passover" Memorial

EVERY year this celebration of our Redeemer's death seems more full of meaning and more impressive. The very fact that the date changes, and must be reckoned after the Jewish method of calculation, adds to the impressiveness, and brings afresh to our minds the various details of the Passover type and their fulfilment in the death of the Lamb of God—"Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us."—1 Cor. 5:7.

The severe bondage of Israel under Pharaoh, the god or ruler of Egypt, calls to mind the bondage of corruption under which "the whole creation groans," being burdened under the reign of Sin and Death; and Pharaoh fitly typified Satan, "the god of this world." In the deliverance of all Israel under the leadership of Moses we see the deliverance, the liberation, of all who reverence God and his Laws under the leadership of the greater than Moses,—Christ, head and body, during the Millennium. In the overthrow of Pharaoh and his hosts we see the type of the destruction, in the Second Death, of Satan and all who follow his course. These anti-typical blessings are all the pictured results of the anti-typical Passover, of which Christ is the central figure.

The Lamb Slain

The Scripture which refers to our Lord as the Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world indicates to us that all the details of this Passover were clearly in the mind and plan of God, not only since the Fall of Adam under the death sentence, but from long before Adam's creation. It thus assures us that although the Justice of God only was manifested for centuries, although divine Love was not "**manifested**" until the first advent of Jesus, nevertheless Love was in God's heart toward his creatures,—from the beginning.

As the Passover **deliverance** represented the Millennial blessing, so the Passover **night** represented this Gospel Age, in which all who trust in God wait for his salvation;—in which the entire "household of faith" feeds on the unleavened bread of Truth, mingled with the bitter herbs of trial and testing, waiting for the Morning;—in which the Church "of the first-born," under the protection of "the blood of the Lamb" is **passed over** from condemnation to justification, from death to life. Ah! there it is! For that reason we keep a continual feast of rejoicing in the Lord, feeding on our Lamb and unleavened bread and herbs. For this reason, also, we keep the annual Memorial of all this, "for even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us, therefore let us keep the feast."—1 Cor. 5:7.

It was **this** that our Master enjoined upon all his disciples, saying, "As often as ye do **this,** [as, year by year, ye shall frequently, before my second coming, **do this**] do it in remembrance of me;—and no longer in remembrance of the typical lamb and the typical passing over of the typical first-born of typical Israel.

For centuries the Adversary blinded the Lord's people to this simple custom of the early Church, persuading them first of all that the Romish Mass was the same thing, and later that the quarterly, monthly and weekly celebrations of Protestants would do as well. How much we were losing under those delusions we never knew until graciously brought to see the truth respecting "Christ our Passover, sacrificed for us," on whose account we, "first born," celebrate.

We will no longer be defrauded of the blessing our Lord designed for us. We will "keep the feast." And so surely as the consecrated believers of this age are the "Church of the first-born," so surely will there be a deliverance later of all of the household under the lead of the first-born (Christ), even as the type showed. And that the after-born delivered by Moses will ultimately consist only of the obedient the Apostle clearly shows.—Acts 3:23.

"In the Same Night"

How much more impressive and inspiring it is to celebrate an important matter on its anniversary;—to recall the deeds and words and looks, and place ourselves with the chief actors of that greatest of all dramas which over eighteen centuries ago ended at Calvary. It even strengthens our general faith in divine providence to note that the very day, the very hour, as well as the very year of this tragedy God had predetermined, so that although previously the Jews sought to take him to put him to death, no man laid hands on him, because "**his hour was not yet come.**" The precise time of this great event had not only been typified for centuries with careful precision as to the very day, but our Lord with equal exactness declared "Mine hour is come," and when instituting the bread and wine Memorial of his own death as the antitypical lamb he waited, "and when **the hour was come** he sat down" with his disciples to eat the Passover Supper, saying, "With desire have I desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer."—Luke 22:15. . . .

"This Is My Body"

Apparently it was just when the Passover Supper was ended that our Lord took some of the left-over unleavened bread, blessed it, broke it into pieces, and gave them to his disciples saying, "Take, eat; this is my body given for you; this do in remembrance of me."—Matt. 26:26; Mark 14:22; Luke 22:19.

These words "This is my body" have caused endless disputes for centuries amongst the Lord's people, the basis for the dispute being the Roman Catholic doctrine of the Mass, which claims that under the priest's blessing the bread is changed into the actual flesh of Jesus, which the priest then adores and proceeds to **break** (**a fresh sacrifice**) for the sins of those for whom the Mass is said. To have this procedure resemble that of our Lord, great stress is laid on the words, "This is my body," thereby to prove the body in the bread and the possibility of its sacrifice. But the whole matter is very quickly settled when we remember that our Lord had not yet died when he said these words. Hence he must have meant, "This bread **represents** my body," for any other interpretation or meaning would have been untrue,—for he was still flesh, his change not having yet come in any sense.

Taking our Lord's words in their simple obvious sense, how beautiful is their lesson. Unleavened (pure) bread henceforth would at this Memorial represent our Lord, the bread from heaven, of which we may eat and have everlasting life. The next thought is that this heaven-supplied "bread" must be "broken" in order to be appropriated. And so we see that it was necessary not only for our Lord to come from heaven as the "bread;" but necessary also that he be broken in death—sacrificed for our sins—ere we could appropriate his merit and enjoy everlasting life.

"The Blood of the New Covenant"

The "fruit of the vine" was next introduced as a part of this Memorial of our Lord's loving sacrifice. He explained that it represented his blood—"The blood of the New Covenant, shed for many for the remission of sins." (Matt. 26:28.) What a reminder this is of the **ransom-price** necessary and paid on behalf of the sins of the world. The broken bread taught a part of the lesson, the "cup" taught the remainder of it. We not only need nourishment, strength, assistance to come back to God and his favor, but we need the precious blood—the life of our Lord as our redemption price to release us from the condemnation of Justice.

The Lord's disciples must, by faith partake of (appropriate) **both** the "bread" and the "cup," or they cannot be one with him. More than this: the Apostle shows that there is another subsequent view of this Memorial. We who thus eat and drink—who thus partake of our Savior's merits—are reckoned in with him as his "members," as his "body," being broken; and our lives sacrificed in his service under his direction are counted as a part of his sacrifice. The Apostle's words are: The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion [common-union] of the blood of Christ? The loaf which we break, is it not the common-union of the body of Christ? For we being many are one loaf, and one body, because we are all partakers of that one loaf [Christ]."—1 Cor. 10:16, 17.

Ah, yes! How deep are the Lord's lessons! and the deeper we look the more beauty we see, the eyes of our understanding opening more and more as we appreciate and heartily obey. "Let us keep the feast" in both senses, then: (1) Appropriating and feasting on the great work done for us by our Redeemer and the riches of grace granted us through him; and (2) Appreciating our privilege of joint-sacrifice with our Redeemer—laying down our lives in his service, for the brethren, etc., and thus "filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ."—Col. 1:24.

Left behind, not because our Lord could not suffer enough for all, nor because his sufferings were not sufficient for all, but because he wished to have us with him to share his nature and his glory, and only by suffering with him and as his **members** could we be allowed to share his glory, honor and immortality.

"Show Forth the Lord's Death"

We exhort all the Lord's brethren everywhere to join us in observing the Lord's Memorial on its proper anniversary. Gather with as many as profess faith and consecration—urge not others. Let us meet in twos and threes and larger groups as opportunity permits. Take a day or two off if necessary to assemble with brethren nearest you. Do not let monetary considerations decide everything. One spiritual feast with the Lord and those who celebrate his Memorial in sincerity is worth more to us than several meals of natural food. Man shall not live by earthly bread alone, but specially by the bread from heaven.

Even the solitary ones who **cannot possibly** meet with even one more should celebrate. "Soda biscuits" are unleavened bread and will do very well—though if you live near a Hebrew family they will be pleased to sell you an unleavened loaf (cracker) for a cent or two. As for "fruit of the vine:" if you have none you can stem raisins and use the juice, which will be "fruit of the vine" as truly as any other.

But do not let us allow **preparations** for the Memorial to so fill our thoughts that the real meaning of the emblems will be forgotten. On the contrary, let us give as much of the preceding and the succeeding days as possible to prayer, and to meditation on the stupendous events memorialized, and feed upon the Living Bread in our hearts with thankful joy.

We again recommend that after the season of communion, while partaking of the symbolic bread and cup, the meetings all close as did the one our Lord conducted as an example. "They sang a hymn and went out." Let us do the same. Omitting our usual greetings, etc., let us keep our thoughts with the Lord in Gethsemane, at the High Priest's Court, before Pilate, before Herod, before Pilate again—beaten, condemned to death, carrying his cross, crucified—for our sins. These thoughts are sure to make us appreciate our Lord the more and to hate sin the more, and thus will help us to realize better "what manner of persons we ought to be in all holy conversation and godliness."

We would like to have a postal card from each little company thus celebrating, stating the number present and participating. Please **appoint** some one, for what is everybody's business is not attended to properly. But have the appointment made a week or more before, so that it will not disturb the proper closing of the meeting.—Z. '05:86-88.

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Why should we fear? What should we fear? "If God be for us who can prevail against us?" True, evil doers do seem to prevail at times—do really prevail against us—as, for instance, the Jewish Sanhedrin prevailed against our Lord to his crucifixion; but such prevailing is only seemingly against us. In reality, as the Apostle declares, it is working out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. We are to view matters from this standpoint, and to rejoice in whatever tribulation divine wisdom may see fit to permit to come against us, anxious only that our union and relationship with the Lord may be maintained.—Z. '04:250.

The Cup of the Lord and the Table of the Lord

"Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table and of the table of devils. Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than he?"—1 Cor. 10:21, 22.

WE find these words of warning addressed, not only to "the Church of God at Corinth," but also "to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord." (1 Cor. 1:2.) They apply to the entire probationary membership of the Gospel Church down to the end of the age.

Those whose hearts are still loyal and true to God may at first think strange of such an admonition, and say, "Paul, Paul, why so counsel us when we have no desire to touch or taste or handle the devil's goods? Such counsel seems to betoken some mistrust of our loyalty to the Lord." But Paul replies, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." The warning is a wholesome one: our testing and trial are not yet finished: while the Lord's cup is presented to us, the devil, as an angel of light, and with great subtlety, presents his cup also; and while the Lord spreads his table, the devil spreads his also.

What is the Lord's cup? Call to mind the Lord's reference to it—"The cup which my Father hath given me to drink, shall I not drink it?" And again, when its bitter dregs were to be drained to the end, hear him pray, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me! nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." And yet again, "O my Father, if this cup may not pass from me except I drink it, thy will be done." It is the cup of sacrifice, even unto death. And not only is it the sacrifice of life, but of reputation and all that humanity holds dear. The life is sacrificed in the midst of reproaches and persecution and extreme trials of faith and patience. After the last supper with his disciples Jesus took the symbolic cup, saying, "This is my blood of the new testament which is shed for many for the remission of sins. . . . Drink ye all of it." (Matt. 26:27, 28.) The Apostle (1 Cor. 10:16) refers to the same cup saying, "The cup of blessing, for which we bless God, is it not a participation of the blood of the Anointed one?" And so also, "The loaf which we break, is it not a participation of the body of the Anointed one? Because there is one loaf we, the many, are one body."

Thus we see that the body of Christ is invited to share the same cup with the Head—the cup of sacrifice, of ignominy and reproach. "Drink ye all of it." And blessed is he who has thus far so faithfully partaken of the Lord's cup that he can say, "The reproaches of them that reproached thee have fallen upon me."

We have seen what is the Lord's cup: now what is the cup of devils? Well, it is a cup of sacrifice also; and those who drink of it sacrifice their true happiness in the present life and their prospects for the life to come. These, however, are the dregs of Satan's cup: these do not appear upon the surface. Its surface sparkles with hopes of earthly prosperity, pride, self-exaltation and "honor one of another:" and to attain these hopes, time, talent and influence are sacrificed to the bitter and disappointing end. . . .

The table of the Lord has been spread for his saints, his Church, from the very beginning of the Gospel age; and it has always been supplied with meat in season; and some of the Lord's people have been appointed to serve. Thus, for instance the apostles served in the beginning of the age, not only in setting before the Lord's people the meat in due season, but also in laying up in store food for the Church in future days. (2 Pet. 1:15, 19.) Their service has been valuable to the entire Church, even to the present day. And all through the age there have been devout, godly men who called the Lord's people to his table, and ministered to them from its bounty; and the hungry have been fed and blessed.

But now the end, the harvest of the age, has come, the richest season of all the year, when the buds of prophecy and promise have developed and are now bringing forth their golden fruit, and the table of the Lord fairly groans under its bounty. And not only so, but the Lord of the harvest himself, being now present, according to his promise, comes forth and serves his people. (Luke 12:37.) Here, as never in all the past, the richness and fatness of the purposes and promises of God are made manifest in all their completeness. Here is a systematic theology such as the Church has never before known,—the plan of salvation set before us in such order and beauty that it surpasses our brightest hopes: a plan consistent and harmonious in every part and wrought out silently and grandly through all the ages past on principles of the most profound moral philosophy, and with a precision and exactness of time and order that are suggestive of the mathematical precision of the great Designer, Executor and Revealer. So glorious is it in its completeness, its symmetry and beauty, that the satisfied soul perceives that no addition could be made to it without marring its excellence, and joyfully exclaims, "It is the Lord's doing and the Lord's revealing, and it is marvelous in our eyes;" and "What more can he say than to us he hath said" of his wisdom and love and grace? Though the Lord makes use of human agency to portray and proclaim the riches of his grace and his loving kindness to the sons and heirs of God, and though he permits all at the table to be co-workers together with himself in serving one another at the feast, to God belongs all the glory of both plan and execution; and to our Lord and Head belongs the praise of this service of the revealing, and of the anointing of our hearts to receive it, and our eyes to behold it, and our ears to hear it, and our tongues to declare it. Glory to God in the highest, and unto the Lamb forever and ever! Let the whole earth be filled with his glory! . . .

But there are other tables. There are tables of devils: tables laden with all manner of subtle and ingenious evil doctrines, bringing in "damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them," wresting the Scriptures, perverting them, undermining their teaching, and substituting human philosophies. . . .

Some, alas! after they have accepted the invitation to the Lord's table, and have tasted and seen that the Lord is good, do turn away from the Lord's table to the tables of devils, apparently thinking they can return at their pleasure and be welcomed again at the Lord's table, and come and go at will and partake of both. "Oh yes," say they, "we are not narrow-minded weaklings, afraid to taste anything except what we find on one table. True, the table of the Lord is a very good one; but there are good things on the other tables too, and we taste everything; yes, we 'prove all things, and hold fast that which is good,' no matter where we find it."

Such, alas! is the attitude of many, who forget that "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall;" and if the efforts of faithful brethren fail to convince them of the error of their way, it is not long before they begin to manifest a distaste for the food supplied at the Lord's table, and it becomes more and more evident that soon they must leave it altogether. The unwholesome and poisonous dishes on the devil's table soon vitiate the taste, undermine the spiritual health, and produce abnormal cravings for that which is not good; and the spiritually sick soul has no longer any disposition to feast at the Lord's table. Nor does the Lord desire that he should; for in leaving the table of the Lord he has done despite to the spirit of favor, and if he persist in such a course he must depart altogether: for "Ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table and the table of devils." "Ye cannot please two masters."

In the act of going from the Lord's table to the table of devils he who does so virtually says that he is not satisfied with the bounties of divine providence, and that he still has some respect for the devil, the great enemy of God. Thus he proves his disloyalty to God by his fellowship with unrighteousness. In quoting the scripture, "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good," he forgets the accompanying modification, "Abstain from all appearance of evil." (1 Thes. 5:19-22.) We have much to do, and all we can do, if we do it well, in proving the abundant merits of the food upon the Lord's table, and in appropriating it to our spiritual life and health and serving it to others. We taste and see that the Lord is good, and prove the healthfulness of his doctrines, but we have nothing to do with the doctrines of devils, except to abstain from them, and to warn others of their ill effects, as illustrated in those who have tampered with them.

Any child of God should be able to tell at a glance the devil's table from the Lord's table, especially after he has been fed at the Lord's table. The foundations of any system are easily discovered, and there is only one true foundation—Christ, the ransom. "Other foundation can no man lay." (1 Cor. 3:11; 15:3.) And any one whose soul has been satisfied with the truth, should perceive at once the deformity of error. As a musician's ear, trained to the beautiful harmonies of sound, quickly detects a discordant note, or as an artist's eye, trained to all the fine distinctions of form and color and order, quickly marks the defective work of an amateur, so the mind and heart, educated in the beautiful harmonies and the perfect and artistic order and system of the Divine Plan, quickly detect the discord of error, and they need no other satisfaction and can find no higher delight; and the soul armed with this "whole armor of God" needs no other preparation to be able to withstand either the subtle or the brazen-faced incursions and attacks of error. "Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil;" rest in the Lord, and be satisfied; and feed at the Lord's table only, if you would have that spiritual health and vigor which is proof against all the pestilences of this evil day.

To those who are not satisfied at the Lord's table after having feasted there, apply those words of the Lord by the Prophet Isaiah (1:1-6). "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth, for the Lord hath spoken: I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider." The ox and the ass know enough to return again and again to the owner and crib where hitherto they have been well fed. In this they manifest more discretion than those of the Lord's people who forsake his table to prove the dishes offered on the devil's table, or to turn to the unclean tables where all that is good is made unclean by association with that which is unclean.

It is not surprising, then, that the Lord will not permit such to return to his table—"Ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table and the table of devils." Why? Because in thus turning away from the Lord's table where they have been so richly fed, and where the Lord has girded himself to serve, they have manifested disloyalty to him, and have despised the riches of his grace, and done despite to the spirit of favor. Those who wilfully do so after being once enlightened are of that sinful class typified by rebellious Israel. The Prophet describes them in no uncertain terms, saying, "Ah, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters! They have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward. . . . The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it."

Nor are we narrow-minded in confining our studies to the divine plan, regardless of all vain philosophies and human traditions and speculations; for its scope is as wide as redemption, its science the most exact, and its philosophy the most profound. Having learned the divine plan revealed in the Scriptures, it is the privilege of all who are imbued with its spirit to apply its measuring lines to the whole matter of divine revelation, and thus, by its assistance together with the hallowed influences of prayer and communion with God, to receive that education in spiritual things which enables us to appreciate with a musician's ear the finer strains of the heavenly melody and its precision of rhythm and order; and with an artist's eye the fine and beautiful shadings of divine wisdom and grace.

Oh, no! we shall not be narrow-minded in thus following the guidance of the Lord into "the deep things of God," now revealed in his due time, "which things the angels desire to look into." and which will be the saint's delight through all eternity. What think you? Will the saints and angels be narrow-minded when the devil and his tables are all destroyed? Let us away with every evil thing, and find our delight in God, and be satisfied with the consolations of his abundant grace. Let the language of our hearts continually be:—

"No longer far from rest I roam,
And search in vain for bliss:
My soul is satisfied at home:
The Lord my portion is."
—Z. '95: 273-276.

Standing at the Mark

WE HAVE heretofore suggested what we now wish to further, if possible, emphasize; namely, the fact that there is a Divine standard of holiness, of righteousness, which, if it be not attained, will mean our non-acceptance by the Lord as members of his Elect Church; and, more than this, our unfitness for eternal life upon any plane. This standard of character, or mark of perfection, as we have pointed out, is not a standard or mark of fleshly perfection, because the Lord accepts amongst his consecrated disciples those of various degrees of mental, moral and physical degeneracy. The justification which he provides makes up for the blemishes of each, for the more blemished as well as for the less blemished. The robe of his righteousness imputed is as necessary to the noblest as to the most degraded, and renders the latter as acceptable as the former.

From this standpoint it is recognized that the heart, the renewed mind, the renewed will, is the spirit-begotten New Creature which is on trial before God. It has professed a thorough consecration to righteousness and opposition to sin, a complete deadness to it, and a determination to mortify, to deaden, the will of the flesh to the extent of its ability. From the very start this condition is pleasing and acceptable to the Lord. Nevertheless, it is Scripturally represented at first as being merely a "babe" condition, according to one illustration, and according to another merely a "begotten" condition. Progress must be made, character must be developed, and then, further, it must be tested. "Not every one who saith, Lord, Lord, shall enter the Kingdom." Not every one who professes consecration, and newness of life, and self-sacrifice in the interests of truth and righteousness, can be accepted as a joint-heir with Christ. Time must be given for development and for proving.

Love for God they have, from the very outset. But it is not love of the highest type. As already shown, it is largely, if not entirely, duty love. . . . As the spiritual food is appropriated, and spiritual exercise is taken, strength of character comes in, the eyes of our understanding open more widely, and lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the Divine character are discerned which were not visible at the first. This brings us to a higher type of love for God—a love for his glorious character.

Meantime, also, a sympathetic love for the world is gradually developing in the spiritual "babe." As the principles of the Divine character are seen and appreciated, the New Creature begins to apply these to everything in life, and hence increases in sympathetic love toward man and beast, friend and foe. Another element of love is gradually attained also: At first the "babe" in Christ loves some of the brethren—the nobler, the gentler, the better educated ones, etc.; but gradually, as the Divine character is discerned, and the Divine love becomes shed abroad in the heart, this love broadens out so that it includes every member of the family of God and every member of the fallen race—yea, even enemies. With this development comes spiritual activity, called in the Scriptures quickening—"You hath he quickened." This quickening implies activity in the service of God, and the service of the brethren, and if outside opportunity beyond this permit, it would mean an activity in the service of all needing assistance such as we could give.

The Christian life here illustrated, which began as a "babe in Christ," has by this time reached the standard of manhood in Christ, and is at the Mark of Perfect Love—for God, for the brethren, for the neighbor and for the enemies. Not until this point shall have been reached could such a person be considered fit for heaven, or for eternal life on any plane.

We are to bear in mind that there is no development in heaven, and hence perfection of character must be attained by the saints before they die. And, similarly, the world during the Millennium must attain this perfect development before the close of the age in order to be fit for eternal life according to the Divine promise and standards.

Is it asked to what extent will this standard of perfect love in the heart manifest itself in the flesh? We answer, that during the Millennial Age it will manifest itself perfectly in the flesh, for the world then will be judged according to the actual attainments in their flesh, and perfection by restitution will be not only possible, but required. But as for us, we who are being judged not according to the flesh but according to the spirit, to what extent will the new mind, the new nature, when at the Mark of Perfect Love, be able to govern and control the flesh? Our answer is, that the degrees of control will vary much, according to the degrees of imperfection with which the mortal body is afflicted.

The only standard which we can set forth is that the new nature, new mind, new will, would be very regretful, very sorrowful, in respect to any laches, ~~or~~ errors, of ~~its~~ mortal body. The Lord would know (and perhaps the brethren also to some extent) of the New Creature's endeavor to control the mortal body by the degree of its grief in connection with every error, and its continually renewed effort to bring every power of the body, and even every thought, into complete subjection to the will of God in Christ. Any sympathy with sin is an evidence that the New Creature is not at the Mark. And no sympathy with sin, but constant endeavor for righteousness, is evidence that it is at the Mark.

Some may be at this Mark for a longer and some for a shorter period. Our Lord was surely at it from the beginning of his ministry. He was tested there, while at the Mark of perfect love. All the besetments of the Adversary and of the world failed to move him from that position of perfect love. He laid down his life at this Mark. St. Paul was surely at this Mark for many years before his actual death. He was continually laying down his life for the brethren, continually serving his enemies and praying for them; and surely he was continually loving and serving the Lord with his every power and talent.

No Christian should be satisfied with a long delay in reaching the Mark. . . . And once attained, it should be **held at any cost** through all the trials and difficulties which the Adversary, and the world, and the flesh, might be permitted to bring against us. The severest temptations come **after** we have reached the Mark—temptations to slackness in service of God; temptations to withhold parts of our sacrifice; temptations to deal unkindly, uncharitably, unlovingly with the brethren, or unjustly with our neighbor, or ungenerously with our enemies. All of these must be resisted as we prize our eternal life, as we prize the promise of joint-heirship and fellowship with our Redeemer in His Kingdom.

Whoever sees this subject clearly must realize that as a Christian he has to do with a great proposition which will thoroughly test his loyalty, his courage, his zeal, his love. He will need to remember the Lord's comforting assurances of grace to help in every time of need if he would come off a victor and not be dismayed, nor have his courage beaten down by the Adversary's attacks.—Z. '09: 270, 271.

On Trial for Life

"For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye, through the spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."
—Rom. 8:13.

THERE is no intimation in this scripture of a second probation for any of those addressed: the words were spoken and written for those who, in the **present** existence, are on trial for life. It does not say, If ye live after the flesh, ye shall have another trial; neither does it say, Ye shall be punished with eternal torments; but it does speak of a **present probation,** the issue of which shall be either life, or death—the extinction of life, cessation of existence.

Neither does the text say anything about faith in the atoning sacrifice of Christ as a requisite to salvation: it says nothing whatever about what we believe or do not believe, but simply and only about **how we live.** Shall we, therefore, spring to the conclusion, as many do, that it teaches that it makes no difference what we believe if we only live righteously? By no means; and those who consider it to be in conflict with either the doctrine of restitution (the Millennial age of judgment or trial for the world) or the ransom, or who have failed to observe its contradiction of the theory of eternal torment, have taken but a shallow observation of the Apostle's teaching, and in fact have lost its entire force.

Not noticing that the words are addressed to the Church, and not to the world, the heedless Christian applies the admonition to the world, and allows it to lose its force upon himself. This is the very reverse of the Apostle's intention: he is talking **to the saints, to consecrated believers** in the redemption, who have been begotten of the holy Spirit and become new creatures in Christ Jesus. (Rom. 8:1-8.) And it is for this reason that he says nothing here about faith in the ransom, that being conceded; nor about the Millennial age of trial, because those addressed are on trial **now,** and their trial will be over and their reward obtained before the world comes into judgment.—1 Cor. 6:2.

The warning, therefore, is not at all applicable to the world, but is full of solemn import to the Church—to the consecrated believers, new creatures in Christ Jesus, who, having been begotten of the holy Spirit, have now a spiritual nature, the old human nature having been consecrated to death. Such, having solemnly covenanted with God to present their bodies—their human nature—a living sacrifice (which was acceptable through Christ, and therefore accepted of him), and to henceforth live after the spirit, are not at liberty now either to annul that covenant, or to ignore it. They cannot claim again that (redeemed human nature) to which, by their covenant, they have given up all right, claim and title. And if they endeavor to do so, either by ignoring or despising their covenant, they thereby forfeit their claim to the new, spiritual nature, which can only be attained by faithfulness to the covenant of sacrifice, even unto death.

It is therefore **logically** manifest, even if the Apostle had not said it, that if **we,** consecrated believers, turn back again to live after the flesh, **we** shall die; that for us to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. (Rom. 8:6.) Our Lord's words in Matt. 16:24, 25 are to the same effect—"Whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it."

An important question then is, What is it to live after the flesh? We answer, It is to live after, or in conformity to, and in gratification of, the inclinations and cravings of the fallen human nature. And it is the easiest thing possible to do this. All we have to do is just listlessly to abandon ourselves to the current of our old nature, and cease to strive against it. As soon as we do this, we begin to float down the stream, and by and by we find the current more and more rapid and resistance more and more difficult.

The death to which our text points as the inevitable end of such a course, is manifestly the "second" death. We were redeemed from the first death and then placed on trial for eternal life, and in the event of failure, the loss of that new life will be the second death,—from which there can be no redemption and no deliverance.

The Apostle defines the works of the flesh thus (Gal. 5:19-21—"Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these,—Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings and such like." What moral filth and pollution this describes; but such is the tendency of the fallen human nature. Just cease to strive against the old nature, and presently some of these noxious weeds will be flourishing and crowding out the good that remains.

"Ah, well," says one, "I have not all those mean qualities." Well, we are glad you have not: very few people have all of them; but beware, you may not know what manner of spirit you are of. Be sure that your old nature is not without an inherited and perhaps a formerly cultivated bias in some of these directions. Watch and pray against them, that ye enter not into temptation.

On the other hand, consider the blessed fruits of the spirit (Gal. 5:22, 23), which are "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. Against such there is no law." To live in the cultivation of these graces is to "live in the spirit." And "if we live in the spirit, let us also walk in the spirit"—make progress in the spiritual life. "Walk in the spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh; for the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other."—Gal. 5:25, 16.

Thus the Christian life is of necessity a warfare, a battle, between the new and the old natures, a hand to hand conflict which we dare not relinquish; for . . . the issues of life and death are in it. How solemn a thing is it, therefore, to live under these circumstances; for daily and hourly we stand before the bar of judgment. The words of our text have no application to the world now, but to us who are now on trial: If we live after the flesh, we shall die; but if through the spirit we do mortify [put to death, refuse to gratify] the deeds of the body [the tendencies of the old nature], we shall live." And all who are truly the sons of God will do this; "for," says the Apostle (verse 14), "as many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God." If we wilfully refuse the leading of God's spirit, we forfeit the relationship of sons; if we listlessly disregard it, we endanger that relationship, and as surely as we are sons we shall receive chastisement for our correction and discipline.

But while we should be very grateful for the chastening, restraining hand of the Lord which thus helps to keep us in the straight and narrow way in which the spirit of God leads his own, we should be very careful to require just as little of it as possible. "If we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged of the Lord" and chastened. (1 Cor. 11:31, 32.) But, nevertheless, with the most careful and prayerful watching against the uprisings of the old will of the flesh, we will doubtless make some missteps and need some of the Lord's chastening; for, says the Apostle (Heb. 12:5-12), "What son is he whom the Father chasteneth not? If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons, but if ye be without chastisement whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons; for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. Let us, therefore, not forget the exhortation which speaketh unto us as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him."

In the difficult course before us, and in view of all the dangers that beset it, how blessed is the promise that our Heavenly Father is ever willing to give the holy spirit to them that ask him, and the assurance also that if we be filled with the spirit we shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh. How necessary is it, therefore, to live near the fountain of divine grace, to pray without ceasing—especially in these last times when our great adversary is so active and so cunning in his devices to deceive and lead astray the Lord's people.

The words of the poet are most appropriate to every one at this particular time—

"Leave no unguarded place,
No weakness of the soul;
Take every virtue, every grace,
And fortify the whole."—Z. '95:7, 8.

The Heavenly City Resplendent

Rev. 21:22-27.

IN THE symbolism of Scripture a city represents a government; as for instance, symbolic Babylon is denominated "that great city (government) which ruleth over the kings of the earth." The New Jerusalem, as a symbol, represents the new spiritual government of the Millennial age. It is not earth-born, it is not reared by men, but, as here pictured, it descends from God out of heaven—it is spiritual in every sense of the word—of God and not of men. It is for this kingdom, this government, that our Lord taught us to pray, "Thy kingdom come—thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." The declaration that the city is adorned as a bride for her husband implies its grandeur and beauty and perfection, as a bride's adornment on such an occasion is particular and elaborate to the last degree. But additionally to this it reminds us that in the government of the future, the judges of the world are the saints, now being selected through faithfulness in trial and tribulation, and that these are frequently called the Bride, the Lamb's wife and joint-heir in the Kingdom. The Revelator elsewhere strikingly brings this thought to our attention: the angel calls to him, "Come hither, and I will show thee the Bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God."—Verses 9-11.

We are not to think of this holy city as being composed of literal stones, coming down through the air; we are to remember, on the contrary, that the saints of this present time are "living stones," as the Apostle Peter explains. (1 Pet. 2:4-7.) This glorious city will not be visible to the natural eye—neither Christ nor the saints in glory can be seen of men; only those "changed" from human to spiritual nature see these matters in the full; but the whole world will be quickly made aware of the fact that a new government has been instituted,—a government of righteousness, and with all power, and that thereafter whosoever doeth righteousness shall be blessed, and whosoever doeth evil shall be punished. . . .

The city, the glorified Church, the kingdom class, during the Millennial age, will be "kings and priests unto God, and reign upon the earth," "a thousand years." (Rev. 5:10; 20:4.) This City class, the glorified Church, it is declared will have no need of the sun or the moon. Nothing in the statement indicates that the world will not have and need both sunlight and moonlight during the Millennial age, and subsequently, "as long as the sun and moon endure." (Psa. 72:5.) And while it will be true that the Church, as spirit beings, will not have need of literal sunlight and literal moonlight, nevertheless, this is not the thought. The sun and the moon here are symbolical, as in Chapter 12:1; the sun signifies the light of this Gospel age; the moon signifies the typically reflected light of the Gospel in the Law and the prophets of the previous dispensation. The glorified Church will have no need of the light which in the present time she so much enjoys through the Word and spirit, and the Law and the prophets. She will have, instead of these, a much more excellent glory, to which the Apostle refers when he says, "Now (with all the light, privileges and opportunities which we enjoy, both as respects the representations of God through the Law and the prophets, and through the instructions and leadings of the spirit in the present) we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face; now we know in part; then we shall know even as we are known."—1 Cor. 13:12.

The Church, the Temple of God, will be so filled with all the fulness of God, when made like unto the glorious Lord, that nothing could add to their blessing of knowledge and divine favor:—will be so filled with the glory of God that from her, as from the Sun of Righteousness, shall proceed the light of the glory of God, which shall heal and bless the world during the Millennial age. This is the Sun of Righteousness to which our Lord referred in Matt. 13:43, "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father"—our Lord Jesus, the Head of the Church, of course being included. The same Sun of Righteousness is mentioned by the Prophet, saying, "The Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in his beams." (Mal. 4:2.) Nevertheless, while so filled with the Lord's glory we are not to lose sight of the fact which the Apostle impresses upon us, saying that Christ is the Head of the Church, even as the Father is the Head of Christ Jesus. Hence the Lord Almighty and the Lamb will always be an inner Temple in this great Temple, which God has provided for the World's blessing during restitution times.—Verse 22.

When this Sun of Righteousness shall shine forth, its blessings of healing, refreshment and life, mental, moral and physical, upon the world of mankind, the nations shall walk in the light of it. (The words "of them that are saved" are not in old MSS. Indeed, it is because they are **not saved** that they need this special light during the Millennial age, in order to their enlightenment, their salvation, their restitution.) "And the kings of the earth do bring their glory into it." (The words, "and honor" are not found in old MSS.) The expressions "nations" and "kings" are not to be understood as signifying that the world of mankind during the Millennial age will be divided into nationalities and kingdoms as at present: the word "nations" here signifies peoples, and is intended to show that all peoples, and not merely the people of Israel, will be thus favored under God's Kingdom. The word "kings" represents those princes or chief ones of the earth who, during the Millennial age, will be the chief representatives of the heavenly, spiritual, invisible Kingdom of Christ. These princes, as we have already seen, will be Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and all the faithful prophets of the previous dispensation, who, loving God before the call to the Kingdom and to the Bride class, cannot be of it, but because of their faithfulness will be the princes whom the Lord will establish in all the earth—first making them perfect individuals, and qualifying them for their office, as a reward for their faithfulness to God in the dark times in which they lived—their manifestation of love for righteousness and trust in the Omnipotent One.

The bringing of their glory into the city, the Kingdom, signifies their acknowledgment of this heavenly Kingdom, their rendering of tribute of praise, thanks, worship and obedience to it as God's agency. And this rendering of glory to the Kingdom will continue throughout the entire Millennial age, as the princes throughout the earth will make known to the people that not in their own names or authority do they rule and execute judgment and establish righteousness, but in the name and as the ministers and representatives of the glorified Christ. The result will be that all the people will ascribe honor and praise and majesty and glory to the Lord's Anointed, through whom their redemption and restitution was and is being accomplished; and this is indicated in verse 26.

Then, in consideration of the fact that this book of symbols, while relating to the future, is addressed to God's consecrated elect Church in the present time, and in view of the fact that this message would be communicated to and more or less understood by those who would seek to make their calling and election sure to a part in the glorious city, the 27th verse is added, declaring that "In nowise shall there enter into it anything common, or he that doeth abomination and falsehood—but only they who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life." The Lamb's Book of Life we must understand to include those, and only those, who attain to position of joint-heirship with Christ, whose names are written in heaven during this age, and who are faithful to their covenant. What a glorious incentive we have here to faithfulness! What a warning against the slightest sympathy with anything unclean, untrue, or in anywise contrary to the divine standard of holiness! If we appreciate the glorious things of the divine provision for the Church and for the world, these promises and offers will have their influence upon us, and under their influence we are expected to keep our garments unspotted from the world; to be without spot or wrinkle or any such thing; to hate every contamination of the flesh upon our robe of righteousness; and to seek immediately in prayer for the removal of any spot or wrinkle or any such thing from our wedding garment,—that thus we may abide in the Lord's love, and in the due time be "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light." —Z. '01:199-202.

"Truth is Stranger than Fiction"

(Continued from O.C.G. No. 77.)

Light Out of Darkness

I WILL NOT go back to tell how the light began to break through the clouds of prejudice and superstition which enveloped the world under Papacy's rule in the dark ages. The Reformation movement, or rather movements, from then until now, have each done their share in bringing light out of darkness. Let me here confine myself to the consideration of the harvest truths set forth in **Millennial Dawn** and **Zion's Watch Tower.**

Let me begin the narrative at the year 1868, when the Editor, having been a consecrated child of God for some years, and a member of the Congregational Church and of the Y.M.C.A., began to be shaken in faith regarding many long-accepted doctrines. Brought up a Presbyterian, and indoctrinated from the Catechism, and being naturally of an inquiring mind, I fell a ready prey to the logic of infidelity as soon as I began to think for myself. But that which at first threatened to be the utter shipwreck of faith in God and the Bible, was, under God's providence, overruled for good, and merely wrecked my confidence in human creeds and systems of misinterpretation of the Bible.

Gradually I was led to see that though each of the creeds contained some elements of truth, they were, on the whole, misleading and contradictory of God's Word. Among other theories, I stumbled upon Adventism. Seemingly by accident, one evening I dropped into a dusty, dingy hall, where I had heard religious services were held, to see if the handful who met there had anything more sensible to offer than the creeds of the great churches. There, for the first time, I heard something of the views of Second Adventists, the preacher being Mr. Jonas Wendell, long since deceased. Thus, I confess indebtedness to Adventists as well as to other denominations. Though his Scripture exposition was not entirely clear, and though it was very far from what we now rejoice in, it was sufficient, under God, to re-establish my wavering faith in the divine inspiration of the Bible, and to show that the records of the apostles and prophets are indissolubly linked. What I heard sent me to my Bible to study with more zeal and care than ever before, and I shall ever thank the Lord for that leading; for though Adventism helped me to no single truth, it did help me greatly in the unlearning of errors, and thus prepared me for the Truth.

I soon began to see that we were living somewhere near the close of the Gospel age, and near the time when the Lord had declared that the wise, watching ones of his children should come to a clear knowledge of his plan. At this time, myself and a few other truth-seekers in Pittsburg and Allegheny formed a class for Bible study, and from 1870 to 1875 was a time of constant growth in grace and knowledge and love of God and his Word. We came to see something of the love of God, how it had made provision for all mankind, how all must be awakened from the tomb in order that God's loving plan might be testified to them, and how all who exercise faith in Christ's redemptive work and render obedience in harmony with the knowledge of God's will they will then receive, shall then (through Christ's merit) be brought back into full harmony with God, and be granted everlasting life. This we saw to be the Restitution work foretold in Acts 3:21. But though seeing that the Church was called to joint-heirship with the Lord in the Millennial Kingdom, up to that time we had failed to see clearly the great distinction between the reward of the Church now on trial and the reward of the faithful of the world after its trial, at the close of the Millennial age—that the reward of the former is to be the glory of the spiritual, divine nature, while that of the latter is to be the glory of restitution—restoration to the perfection of human nature once enjoyed in Eden by their progenitor and head, Adam.

However, we were then merely getting the general outline of God's plan, and unlearning many long-cherished errors, the time for a clear discernment of the minutiae having not yet fully come. And here I should and do gratefully mention assistance rendered by Brothers Geo. Stetson and Geo. Storrs, the latter the editor of **The Bible Examiner,** both now deceased. The study of the Word of God with these dear brethren led, step by step, into greener pastures and brighter hopes for the world, though it was not until 1872, when I gained a clear view of our Lord's work as our **ransom price,** that I found the strength and foundation of all hope of restitution to lie in that doctrine. Up to that time, when I read the testimony that all in their graves should come forth, etc., I yet doubted the full provision—whether it should be understood to include idiots or infants who had died without reaching any degree of understanding, beings to whom the present life and its experiences would seem to be of little or no advantage. But when, in 1872, I came to examine the subject of restitution from the standpoint of the ransom price given by our Lord Jesus for Adam, and consequently for all lost in Adam, it settled the matter of restitution completely, and gave me the fullest assurance that **all must come forth** from their graves and be brought to a clear knowledge of the truth and to a full opportunity to gain everlasting life in Christ.

Thus passed the years 1869-1872. The years following, to 1876, were years of continued growth in grace and knowledge on the part of the handful of Bible students with whom I met in Allegheny. We progressed from our first crude and indefinite ideas of restitution to clearer understanding of the details; but God's due time for the clear light had not yet come.

During this time, too, we came to recognize the difference between our Lord as "the man who gave himself," and as the Lord who would come again, a spirit being. We saw that spirit-beings can be present, and yet invisible to men, just as we still hold and have set forth in **Millennial Dawn,** Vol. II., Chap. 5. And we felt greatly grieved at the error of Second Adventists, who were expecting Christ in the flesh, and teaching that the world and all in it except Second Adventists would be burned up in 1873 or 1874, whose time-settings and disappointments and crude ideas generally as to the object and manner of his coming brought more or less reproach upon us and upon all who longed for and proclaimed his coming Kingdom.

These wrong views so generally held of both the object and manner of the Lord's return led me to write a pamphlet—**"The Object and Manner of The Lord's Return,"** of which some 50,000 copies were published.

It was about January, 1876, that my attention was specially drawn to the subject of prophetic time, as it relates to these doctrines and hopes. It came about in this way: I received a paper called **The Herald of the Morning,** sent by its editor, Mr. N. H. Barbour. When I opened it I at once identified it with Adventism from the picture on its cover, and examined it with some curiosity to see what time they would next set for the burning of the world. But judge of my surprise and gratification, when I learned from its contents that the Editor was beginning to get his eyes open on the subjects that for some years had so greatly rejoiced our hearts here in Allegheny—that the object of our Lord's return is not to destroy, but to bless all the families of the earth, and that his coming would be thief-like, and not in flesh, but as a spirit-being, invisible to men; and that the gathering of his Church and the separation of the "wheat" from the "tares" would progress in the end of this age without the world's being aware of it.—Z. '06:229, 230.

(Continued in Old Corn Gems No. 79.)

KERNELS KERNELS KERNELS

At first we are inclined to say, How strange it is that God should count our faith for anything—how simple, how easy a matter faith is! Why should it be valuable in God's sight? But the more we come to know ourselves the more we come to value faith, to realize that it is a scarce commodity in the world and even amongst Christians, professed believers.—Z. '07:57.

◆

The Christian is to display increasingly the spirit of true holiness. The Apostle says, "Let your moderation be known of all men." (Phil. 4:5.) The very promises made to us in the Scriptures tend to make us sober. Our God is most gracious! —Z. '12:289.

◆

Truly, as the Prophet has declared, Day unto day uttereth speech and night unto night showeth knowledge. How the increasing light of revelation and invention assure us of the boundlessness of our Father's house of many mansions or apartments! What a field for pleasure and usefulness in the divine service, everywhere revealed, God hath prepared for those that love him! When as joint-heirs with our Lord we shall have finished the great work of blessing all the families of earth at the close of the Millennium, there will evidently be other worlds to bless and enlighten. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no limit. —Z. '91:110.

◆

How merciful is the Lord toward all those who are seeking to walk in the footsteps of the Captain of their salvation! How bountiful are the provisions made, not only for their ultimate reward, but also for their encouragement during the sojourn toward the heavenly city, with provision also for the passing over, the covering and the ultimate blotting out of their weaknesses by and through him who loved us and bought us with his own precious blood. —Z. '04:270.

◆

"If any man will do his (the Father's) will, he shall know of the doctrine." (John 7:17.) The intimation is that wrong-heartedness is intimately associated with wrong-headedness, as respects doctrine.—Z. '09:54.

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STANDFAST BIBLE STUDENTS' GENERAL CONVENTION

GIDEON'S BAND CONVENTION

APRIL 14th, 15th, 16th and 17th, 1922

Labor Hall, 1318 Broad Street, Victoria

SECRETARY - - - - - Bro. Bartlett

FRIDAY, April 14th—

Chairman - Bro. Edwards Song Leader - Bro. Haller

TRUMPETS

"When ye blow an alarm, then the camps that lie on the east parts shall go forward."—Num. 10:5.

Pianist - - - - - - Sr. Presby
10:30 A.M.—Address of Welcome........Bro. Sellars
Response........Bro. Palmer
11:00 A.M.—Temple Study........Bro. Bartlett
Pianist - - - - - - Sr. Hogen
2:00 P.M.—Praise and Testimony........Bro. Hanham
3:00 P.M.—Intermission.
3:30 P.M.—Old Corn Gem Study (page 6)........Bro. Vance
Pianist - - - - - Sr. McCarter
7:30 P.M.—Praise Service........Bro. Cooper
7:45 P.M.—Songs of Solomon Study........Bro. Zinck

SATURDAY, April 15th—

Chairman - - Bro. Zinck Song Leader - Bro. Moore

EMPTY PITCHERS

"We have this treasure in earthen vessels."—2 Cor. 4:7.

Pianist - - - - - - Sr. Bestwick
10:30 A.M.—Bethel Service........Bros. Pocock, Hy. Burdette and Fairbairn
10:45 A.M.—Old Corn Gem Study (page 7)........Bro. Sellars
Pianist - - - - - - Sr. Willison
2:00 P.M.—Praise and Testimony........Bro. Hogen
3:00 P.M.—Intermission.
3:30 P.M.—Tabernacle Study........Bro. Heard
Pianist - - - - - - Sr. Edwards
7:30 P.M.—Praise Service........Bro. Shepherd
7:45 P.M.—Temple Study........Bro. Edwards

SUNDAY, April 16th—

Chairman - - Bro. Heard Song Leader - Bro. Holbrook

TORCHES

"Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear."—Matt. 13:43.

Pianist - - - - - - Sr. Biddle
10:30 A.M.—Bethel Service........Bros. Malcan, Anderson and Barrett
10:45 A.M.—Songs of Solomon Study........Bro. Moore
Pianist - - - - - Sr. Jacobskoetter
2:00 P.M.—Praise and Testimony........Bro. Tirrell
3:00 P.M.—Intermission.
3:30 P.M.—Old Corn Gem Study (page 8)........Bro. Maxwell
Pianist - - - - - - Bro. Sellars
7:30 P.M.—Praise Service........Bro. Thackray
7:45 P.M.—Discourse........Bro. Palmer

MONDAY, April 17th—

Chairman - Bro. Maxwell Song Leader - Bro. Haller

VICTUALS

"Eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness."—Isa. 55:2.

Pianist - - - - - Sr. Alice Maloan
10:30 A.M.—Bethel Service........Bros. F. Burdette Bulmer, Hankins
10:45 A.M.—Songs of Solomon Study........Bro. Edwards
Pianist - - - - - - Sr. Russell
2:00 P.M.—Praise and Testimony........Bro. Biddle
3:00 P.M.—Intermission.
3:30 P.M.—Temple Study........Bro. Zinck
Pianist - - - - - - Sr. Heard
7:30 P.M.—Praise Service........Bro. McCarter
7:45 P.M.—Discourse........Bro. Heard

LOVE FEAST

Old Corn Gems

NUMBER SEVENTY-NINE

"And they did eat of the OLD CORN of the land on the morrow after the Passover . . . and the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the OLD CORN of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year." Joshua 5:11-12.

A SAFE RULE

"WHERE A BROTHER GIVES AN INTERPRETATION OF A SCRIPTURE WHICH DIFFERS FROM THAT GIVEN BY BROTHER RUSSELL, AND BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION SEEMS REASONABLE AND IN HARMONY WITH THE PLAN OF GOD, THEN WE BELIEVE IT A SAFE RULE TO FOLLOW BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION, FOR THE REASON THAT HE IS THE SERVANT OF THE CHURCH, SO CONSTITUTED BY THE LORD FOR THE LAODICEAN PERIOD; AND THEREFORE WE SHOULD EXPECT THE LORD TO TEACH US THROUGH HIM. WHERE THERE ARISES A DOUBT IN THE MIND AS TO WHICH INTERPRETATION IS CORRECT, THEN IT IS ALWAYS SAFER TO RESOLVE THAT DOUBT IN FAVOR OF BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION. WE BELIEVE SUCH TO BE IN HARMONY WITH THE LORD'S WILL." Z. '18:51.

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The World's Redeemer Pictured

(Isaiah 52:13-53:12.)

Golden Text:—"The Lord hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all."

THIS little section of Isaiah's great prophecy is a very striking one. The original prophecy, as is well known, was without division into chapters and verses.

The preceding context points us clearly and distinctly to the second advent of our Lord and his gathering of his people to himself. It describes the harvest of the Gospel age, telling how the Lord's people would know his name—understand and appreciate his true character, announce the presence of the King and the beginning of his reign. (Vs. 6-8.) It also tells of the beginning of favor upon natural Israel, and, looking into the future, points to the Lord's glorification through that people. (Vs. 9-10.) It also shows the separating work of the harvest time, the gathering of the good fish into the vessels, the gathering of the wheat into the barn.

Then, pointing to the Millennial reign of Christ, the first three verses of our lesson (13-15) picture the high exaltation and honor of Jehovah's servant Son, our Lord Jesus, saying, "He shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and honored and shall be very high." The whole earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, which will then shine forth through the blessed and wise government of Immanuel, as has been declared, "The Desire of all Nations shall come;" they shall see that the way of righteousness is the desirable way, the blessed way, the way of true wisdom and happiness, and all who will refuse to come into this attitude shall be cut off from amongst the people in the second death.—Acts 3:23.

Next a contrast is instituted between how our Lord was humiliated and how by and by he shall be exalted. The prophet, so to speak, takes his seat at the cross, and beholds the Lord sadly distorted in his crucifixion, torn in an inhuman manner, his features drawn with pain. The picture of this, as given in Cheyne's translation, is written in poetic form, as was the original. It reads as follows:—

"Deeply marred was his appearance, out of all
human likeness,
And his form out of all semblance to sons of men;
But as deep will be the obeisance of many,
Before him kings shall be awestruck in silence."

The thought evidently is that his glory and honor, influence and power, will be proportionate to the sufferings and ignominy which he experienced. And this is the thought everywhere held out in the Scriptures, not only as respects our Redeemer but also as respects his Church. "If we suffer with him we shall also reign with him." Present trials and sufferings work out for us a "far more and exceeding weight of glory." So in speaking of our Lord the Apostle declares that "he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. **Wherefore** God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth."—Phil. 2:8.

We cannot claim that it is a divine law that glory and honor must be preceded by sufferings and humiliations. Our heavenly Father and the holy angels, highly honored have never been humiliated. Nevertheless we are assured that so far as God's dealings with the Church are concerned, they are along these lines. The suffering is not compulsory but granted us as a privilege, and the exaltation is held out as a reward, marking the degree of divine approval. With this thought before us how it helps us to appreciate the sentiments of the Apostle, "Gladly, therefore, will I glory in tribulation." We glory not in the tribulations themselves, for sometimes they seem to the flesh to be grievous; but our hearts can glory in tribulations, since we know that under the divine arrangement governing our call as the Church of Christ these tribulations are working in us those elements of character pleasing and acceptable in the Father's sight, which eventually he will reward with a share in the exaltation of our Redeemer, our Bridegroom.

So grand, so glorious will be the demonstration of divine power and blessing in the Messiah that no word of dissent will be heard—unto him every knee shall bow and every tongue confess. This will be true not only of the common people, the world in general, but true also of the greatest, the princes, the kings of earth, intellectual kings, financial kings, political kings. All eyes shall be opened, all ears shall be unstopped, to the knowledge of divine goodness and mercy, justice and truth, as it will then be revealed in the Messiah.

"Who Hath Believed Our Teaching?"

In the fifty-third chapter the Prophet looks backward from our day and the coming glory, and intimates that until the glory of the Lord shall be revealed his cause will make comparatively little headway in the world. The true teaching respecting him and his mission will not be generally received—various false teachings, false gospels will have the preference. The inquiry, "Who hath believed our report?" our teaching, our presentations, implies the answer, Few. And so it has been. There were few who had the hearing ears and understanding hearts at the time of our Lord's First advent, and only a few all down throughout the Gospel age have really and truly appreciated the message. . . .

"To whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?" cried the prophet. Alas, it is so that few, very few, see in our Lord Jesus the powerful arm, the omnipotence of Jehovah, stretched down for the aid of our fallen race. Few realize that the work finished at Calvary is the foundation, the basis, upon which the great Jehovah will ultimately establish the Millennial Kingdom for the blessing and uplifting of all the families of the earth. The majority see Jesus as merely the finger of the Lord, doing a comparatively small work for a comparatively small class. As our eyes open we behold to our joy that Messiah, Head and body, will yet constitute the arm of Jehovah, that all-powerful force which shall overthrow evil and establish righteousness and bless all the families of the earth through the seed of Abraham. "If ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."—Gal. 3:29.

God's Ways Not Man's Ways

The prophet proceeds to point out why the report, the teaching, of God's Word and the power of his omnipotent arm for man's salvation have not been discerned by mankind. It is largely because the Lord's way of accomplishing matters is the very reverse of what mankind would have naturally expected. With our mental tendencies, our natural expectations would have been that the Son of the Highest at his first advent would have been manifested in glory and not in humiliation—that the heavenly Father would have sent him in glory and not in humiliation. Even in his taking of the human form and nature we would have expected it to be under such conditions and with such environments as would have shown forth strikingly and forcefully amongst the members of the human race.

It was a disappointment, especially to the Jews, who were expecting a glorious and powerful king, that our Lord came as the man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. To them he appeared too tender a plant to ever prosper. They acknowledged him to be of the Davidic line, but esteemed him to be from one of the roots of David which had lost its virility, its life. They thought him a root out of dry ground, from which they could never hope for a sprout of power and glory and dignity and honor such as they had anticipated Messiah would have. In him they saw not the form of the soldier, the general, which to their conception was the grand, the comely form that Messiah would have, boasting of his power, his strength, his divine support, etc.

No wonder the poor Jews were disappointed, no wonder they considered him undesirable as material for a king, no wonder that they had no hope that he would ever be the great Messiah, the great deliverer. We sympathize with them deeply in their disappointments and in their failure to recognize him as Immanuel. He was despised and rejected of men, even of the men of his own nation, who for sixteen centuries had hoped and waited for his coming. They were ashamed of him, hid their faces from him. He was despised of the Romans and counted unworthy of particular notice. Whether he claimed to be king of the Jews or what not, and the Jews esteemed him not—except the few who, because they were Israelites indeed, were guided to an appreciation of him with a wisdom from on high.

What meant all this? Why should the King of glory, the Sent of God, the heir of all the promises, be thus the man of sorrows and acquainted with grief? Ah! says the prophet, I perceive surely that it was our griefs that he bore, our sorrows that he carried, not his own. We thought that he was stricken of God, that he was afflicted by the Almighty, and that this was an evidence that he was not in divine favor. We misunderstood the entire matter. Now we see that his wounds were for our transgressions, that his bruises were for our iniquities, that our peace with God was secured by the stripes, the chastisements, the penalties of the divine law inflicted upon him. We perceive that by his stripes we are healed,—that the punishment or stripes due to us were laid upon him, that the death sentence that was against us he bore, dying the Just for the unjust that he might bring us to God.

"By His Stripes We Are Healed"

Yes, yes, continues the prophet, we all went astray like sheep, following one another into wrong paths. We, even of the seed of Abraham, brought nigh to God's favor through the Law Covenant under Moses, have failed to retain our position as proper sheep of his fold, and the penalty of divine justice has been borne by the Shepherd for his sheep. Jehovah hath laid on him—charged up to him, accepted of him—the iniquity of us all. How gracious is this message! Those who received it first from Isaiah, having the guidance and enlightenment of the holy Spirit, could not appreciate his words to the full, but, nevertheless, must have to some extent appreciated them—must have drawn some blessing and hope from them. But now, we of this Gospel age, living since the redemption price was paid, and since it was accepted by the Father on our behalf when our Master ascended on high, and since the Pentecostal blessing evidencing our forgiveness has reached every member of the consecrated class to enlighten the eyes of our understanding, to enable us to see the deep things of God and his gracious promises, we may now rejoice in these things so hard for the Jew to understand, and equally impossible for the natural man of the Gentiles to comprehend. Truly our Lord's words are refreshing and explanatory—"To you it is given to know of the mysteries of the Kingdom of God;" to all others these things are "spoken in parables and dark sayings."—Luke 8:10; Matt. 13:10-15, 35.

"He Opened Not His Mouth"

He was oppressed, as a lamb he was led to the slaughter, and as a sheep that before her shearers is dumb; yet he opened not his mouth. The fulfilment of this we see in the case of our Lord. Had he chosen to open his mouth, to argue his case, to defend himself, we may well suppose that the Scribes and Pharisees, high priests and doctors of the Law, Pilate and his soldiers and the Jewish rabble, would have succumbed to the eloquence of him who spoke as never man spoke. Thus he might merely have defended himself with his tongue, and righteously, too, without ever moving a finger in his own defence or exercising any of the divine powers deposited in him, or calling for any of the legions of angels who would have responded to his prayer. He did indeed reply to a question of the High Priest and also to a question by Pilate, but he was dumb so far as making any plea or endeavoring in any manner to deliver himself from the death which he perceived was upon him and which he knew was permitted of the Father. As he himself expressed it—"The cup which the Father hath poured for me, shall I not drink it?"

We must not lose sight of the fact that our dear Redeemer is also our pattern and that we are to walk in his steps. The lesson to us, then, is full submission to divine providence in respect to all of our affairs—those which we see clearly and understand and those also which are obscure to us, some of which at times may seem unnecessary. Our faith must triumph: we must learn that our Father is too wise to err, and that he loves us too much to cause a needless tear, a needless pang. But if he permitted severe afflictions to come upon his Son, his well beloved and only one, that he might be tested and proven in respect to his loyalty to the last degree, shall we wonder that in calling us to be associates of that Son in glory, he should require of us also that we should learn obedience by the things we suffer? Gladly then, says the Apostle, will we suffer; gladly will we take this as an evidence that we are in the hands of the Lord and that he is shaping and fashioning us according to the glorious pattern, that we may ultimately be participants also of the heavenly glories and joys and immortality promised to his faithful.

"By oppression and judgment he was taken away," cut off from life—oppression or injustice so far as those who condemned him were concerned, by divine justice and judgment so far as God was concerned, because he had consecrated himself unto death as man's Redeemer, and the Father had accepted him as such.

"With the Wicked and the Rich"

"And who shall declare his generation, for he was cut off out of the land of the living." Who could suppose that he would have offspring, children—that he would be ultimately the Everlasting Father to the world of mankind? Who could have seen any prospect, any hope, for the race through his death? Who could have foreseen that as all in Adam die, even so all in Christ shall be made alive? To have discerned these things would have been impossible, and the poor Jews and the world in general are not to be blamed for not discerning them. Rather those who have come into relationship to the Lord through faith and through obedience unto consecration, and who have been begotten of the Spirit to newness of nature, and through the Spirit's enlightenment are able to comprehend these wonderful things of the divine plan—these highly favored of God may rejoice in their blessings without condemning those who do not enjoy to the full the same blessings and opportunities in this present time. Yes, the entire secret of the matter lies in our perception that Jesus was the Redeemer, the one who bought the world with his own precious blood, the one who was stricken by the Father, not for his own sins but for our transgressions—for the transgressions of the people, "for the sins of the whole world."

Although he had done no violence he was numbered with the transgressors, with the wicked, in his death, being crucified between two thieves, although there was no deceit in his mouth and he had gained no riches by deceiving or overreaching his neighbor; yet he was buried in the tomb of the rich Joseph of Arimathea. Thus does the prophet mark certain incidents connected with our Lord's death, that our Redeemer's identity might be the more clearly established.

"It Pleased Jehovah"

All these things, apparently so unjust and so unreasonable and so contrary to anything mankind could have expected, Jehovah was pleased to permit. To have exacted such sufferings from Jesus as our penalty would have been an injustice, and this would have been an impossibility to God; but it did please him to allow his only-begotten one to demonstrate his loyalty and faith even unto death, even the death of the cross. It pleased him that the Son should thus be temporarily injured and put to grief because he foresaw the glorious results both to Jesus and to mankind. To his Son he would give more than compensating honor and glory and dignity and power, yea, eternal life, when to his hands would be committed all the remaining features of the divine plan.

Well did the Father know that his Son's faith and obedience would be abundantly rewarded. Well did he know that the soul of Jesus, his being, would constitute the sin offering for Adam and his race, and well he knew that ultimately the Son should see a reward from this travail of his soul which would satisfy him, which would more than compensate every trial, every tear, every pain. And is it not wonderful that in God's providence the called ones of this Gospel age may apply these same consolations and assurances each to his own heart, and know that all things are working together for good to them that love God—to the called ones according to his purpose? Is it not wonderful that we also have the assurance that if we suffer with him we shall also reign with him, that if we experience travail of soul in following in the footsteps of our Redeemer we shall have more than compensating satisfaction, and that the Word of the Lord so guarantees it? To all who accept the Lord's promises in faith the matter becomes a certainty—"Faith can firmly trust him, come what may."

Although when he was cut off from the land of the living none could have declared his generation, his seed, his posterity, yet he shall see his seed—the redeemed and restored of mankind, who at the close of the Millennial age shall be privileged to inherit all the earthly things lost by father Adam, redeemed by Jesus, restored by the Second Adam.

The Importance of Knowledge

The declaration that it was by his knowledge that our Lord Jesus, as the righteous servant of Jehovah, justified many and bore their iniquities, is an important item in this lesson. We see that it was from lack of knowledge of God that the first Adam in his perfection was weak. Not knowing the power of God, not realizing his gracious and merciful character, father Adam considered that all hope of comfort, joy and pleasure in life had gone from him when mother Eve transgressed the divine regulation respecting the forbidden fruit and came under the divine sentence of death. Being unacquainted with the divine character he was without hope respecting her recovery and his own future happiness, and therefore deliberately shared the death penalty with his wife—suicided, so to speak. On the contrary our Lord Jesus, knowing the Father, remembering the glory he had with him before the world was, trusting the Father implicitly, was able to be obedient to the Father's requirements, even unto death, even the death of the cross.

Thus did knowledge serve him in good stead and enable him to pass through the most trying experiences victoriously. It was his knowledge, then, in conjunction with his mental and moral and physical perfection, that enabled our Lord Jesus to fully meet all the requirements of his consecration and thus enabled him to justify many, to redeem Adam and his race—enabled him to bear their iniquities cheerfully, joyfully, delighting to do the Father's will, and for the joy that was set before him enduring the cross, despising the shame.

No wonder, then, that the Scriptures everywhere set forth the thought that knowledge is important to the followers of Jesus; no wonder that they urge upon us that we grow in grace and in knowledge, assuring us that to know God is eternal life. To attain to that relationship to God which will permit us to fully know him and appreciate his just and reasonable and loving commands would signify that we were in the condition which he would be pleased to bless everlastingly, and signify also that, possessing this knowledge, we should be able to fulfil all the reasonable requirements imposed upon us. Let none of us, then, despise knowledge.

Nevertheless, while heartily appreciating it, let us not forget that it is not merely knowledge about his plan, nor knowledge of the various so-called earthly sciences, but the knowledge or acquaintanceship of God himself. Thus the Apostle also declares of our Lord Jesus, "that we may know him," be acquainted with him, be intimate with him. Whoever has this intimate relationship with the Father and the Son has therein the power of God, which will work in him to will and to do the Lord's good pleasure, and ultimately bring him to a glorious inheritance under the divine arrangement. But, as the Apostle points out, to have knowledge of earthly things or of the divine plan without having the heart obedience and the heart acquaintanceship with the Lord, might leave us still poor and wretched and miserable, sounding brass and tinkling cymbals.

The "Great" and the "Strong"

Therefore, because of his faithfulness as God's righteous servant, because guided by his knowledge in his obedience to the Father, because faithful in bearing the iniquities of the many, therefore "God will divide him a portion with the great." How great a portion is not here stated. Other Scriptures inform us that the Father has given him a portion with himself—he overcame and sat down with the Father in his throne. He has indeed been granted a portion with the great—the great Jehovah. In turn he shall divide the spoil with the strong, the spoil of his great conquest over sin and death at the cost of his own life, the spoil of victory, the reward of his own high exaltation far above angels, principalities and powers, and every name that is named—the reward of his high relationship with the Father, the reward of his Millennial Kingdom and its opportunities and privileges of blessing the whole groaning creation, the reward of the Father's smile and favor eternally.

This "spoil," which all came to the dear Redeemer as the one who kept the Law and redeemed the world with his own precious blood, this spoil he proposes to share with the faithful of his followers, the overcomers, here called "the strong." O, what a thought! In all our weaknesses and imperfections we are by the Lord's grace enabled to come off conquerors and more than conquerors through him who loved us and bought us with his precious blood.

With the Apostle we can say, "When I am weak, then am I strong;" when I realize my own imperfections and shortcomings then, by faith realizing the strength and perfection of my dear Redeemer and his provision for all who are his, I can be strong in faith and trust and love, and realize that the exceeding great and precious promises of God's Word are yea and amen to me. In the present life, then, by faith we have a portion with the Lord, and may reckon ourselves as having passed from death unto life, as heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord. But the attainment of all these things, their fulness and completeness, lies beyond the grave, beyond the resurrection, when all the faithful shall be with him and, like him, share his glory, for "he will divide the spoil with the strong."

The Cause of the Matter

Our lesson closes with a reiteration of the general facts stated. All of this greatness given to our Lord and shared with his faithful followers is because he poured out his soul unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors, and bore the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors. How emphatically the Scriptures point out to us that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins, that without the ransom price being paid there could have been no release of Adam and his race from the sentence of death, no hope of any of them attaining life everlasting. As we appreciate this great central thought of the divine plan, let us reverence our dear Master the more as the author of our faith, who, by and by, will be the finisher of it, and let us seek more and more to be faithful to him and to walk in his steps and to lay down our lives for the brethren.—Z. '05: 204-207.

"With Strong Cryings and Tears"

(Matthew 26: 36-50.)

Golden Text:—"Not my will, but thine, be done."—Luke 22:42.

THE Garden of Gethsemane was not a wild woods nor a public garden, but an olive orchard. The name seems to indicate that upon the premises was located an oil-press for the extraction of the oil from the olives. It is supposed to have been the home of the mother of Mark, reputed to have been a wealthy widow, a friend of Jesus' cause. The house and outbuildings were probably in one part of the orchard or "garden."

At all events it seems evident that the property was under the control of Jesus' friends, and that he and his disciples were well acquainted with the spot to which, after eating the Memorial Supper, our Lord and his disciples adjourned. The site now pointed out as this Gethsemane Garden is about half a mile from the wall of Jerusalem, and contains some remarkably old olive trees, the Garden itself being under the care of some monks who reside near by.

When our Lord and his eleven disciples had arrived at the entrance to the Garden or orchard, Jesus left eight of them there as a kind of outer guard, taking with him the favorite three, Peter, James and John, the three who on various occasions had been similarly favored—for instance, in connection with the visit to Jairus' daughter—and it was the same three who were privileged to see the "vision" on the Mount of Transfiguration. While Jesus loved all of his disciples, these three were especially dear to him, probably because of their special zeal and love for him. But on this occasion not even these, his specially dear disciples, could enter into or sympathize with the weight which was upon our Lord's heart; hence he stationed them and went still further along to engage in prayer to the Father. The language of all of the accounts of this incident taken together, especially in the light of the original Greek, shows that a sorrowful loneliness and anguish came upon our Lord with great force at this time. While with the disciples, doubtless in their interest, he had sought to be cheerful and to give them the needful lessons in preparing them for their trials; but now, having done all in his power for them, and having gone to the Father alone, his thoughts turned inward upon himself and his relationship to the Father, and outward upon the public shame of his trial and conviction as a blasphemer, a seditionist, and further on to the contemptuous mockery of the trial, and still further on to his public execution between two thieves. All this, now clearly before his mind, was enough for anguish, for pain, for deep, poignant sorrow.

"The Man of Sorrows—Acquainted With Grief"

In viewing the matter of our Lord's sufferings on this occasion it is well to remember that his perfect organism—untainted, unblemished by sin, undegraded, undulled by dying processes—was much more susceptible to the pains and sorrows of the hour upon him than the feelings of others of the fallen race could be. Under adverse conditions the finer the sentiments and characteristics the greater the pain. A hoodlum ringleader might even glory in a ride in the patrol wagon, while to a refined person the experience would be terrible. Take another illustration: A finely educated musician, with an ear for harmonies well developed, would know a disturbance and a pain from a discordant note that might not at all be appreciated by one of less acute musical talent. We could even imagine that one of the seditious robbers crucified at our Lord's side might have gloried in his death as a triumph had there been over his head those words which were over our Lord's head, "This is the King of the Jews." It is, of course, difficult for us to appreciate perfection, since neither ourselves nor any with whom we have relationship are perfect; but we repeat that it must be true that the perfect organism of our Lord would suffer far more than any of his followers could suffer under the same conditions.

But there was another reason, and indeed it was the chief reason, we may be sure, why our Lord sorrowed on this occasion so that his agony, becoming very intense, produced a bloody sweat. That other reason was his realization of his own situation in relationship to God and the covenant under which he made his sacrifice. To fulfil the Father's will he had left the heavenly glories, stooped even below angels to take the human form and nature, so that he by God's favor might redeem Adam and, in redeeming him, redeem the race condemned in him. He had pleasure, yea, "delight," in this self-abasement, as it is written, "I delight to do thy will, O my God: thy law is written in my heart." (Psa. 40:8.) It was this spirit that led our Lord to a full consecration of himself to death as soon as he was thirty years of age, and could properly thus present himself as our sin offering. The same love and zeal kept him faithful during all the years of his ministry, and enabled him to count as light afflictions all the experiences of life and the various contradictions of sinners against himself—because he realized that he was doing the Father's will.

Why was it, then, that at the very conclusion of his ministry, after he had told his disciples of his coming death, and having explained that he would be "set at naught by the chief priests and elders" and crucified—in the face of all this knowledge, confidence, loving obedience, faithfulness to his consecration vow unto death—why did our Lord experience so terrible an ordeal in the Gethsemane orchard?

The words of the Apostle explain the situation: he says of Jesus, "He offered up strong cryings and tears unto him that was able to save him from [out of] death." (Heb. 5:7.) But others have died, others have faced death in as terrible or even more terrible form, and done it with calmness. Why did our Lord break down in such deep sorrow and such strong cryings as to bring on a bloody sweat? We answer that death to him was a very different proposition from what it is to us. We are already nine-tenths dead, or worse, through our imperfections, our share in the fall, which has benumbed all of our sensibilities, mental, moral and physical, and which renders us incapable of appreciating life in its highest, best and supremely fullest sense. Not so our Lord. "In him was Life"—perfection of life. True he had for three and a half years been laying down his life, using it in the preaching of the truth, and especially in the healing of multitudes of the sick, when virtue or vitality went out of him and healed them all. This indeed weakened his physical frame and strength, but undoubtedly he continued mentally very full of vigor, life, perfection. Besides, our experiences with death and our expectancy of death lead us to estimate it as a certainty sooner or later. On the contrary, our Lord's experiences were with life: for centuries to us untold he had been with the Father and the holy angels, enjoying the perfection of endless life; his experiences with dying men were but for a few short years, and hence to him death had a very different signification from what it has to the dying race.

But there was more than this, much more: The heathen have a hope of future life built upon the traditions of their ancients, and God's people have hope of a resurrection built upon the divine promise and guaranteed to them through the merit of Christ's sacrifice—but what hope had Jesus? He could not share the heathen's hope that the dead were not dead, for he knew to the contrary; he could not share hope in a redemption and a raising up through the merit of another. His only hope, therefore, was that his entire career, from the moment of his consecration to the close, had been absolutely perfect, without flaw in the sight of justice, in the sight of the heavenly Father. It was here when alone that this awful fear overwhelmed him: Had he been perfect in every thought and word and deed? Had he pleased the Father absolutely? and would he be able on the morrow, with such a shrinking from the shame and ignominy as he would experience on account of his perfection—would he be able unflinchingly to perform his part? and would he, as a result, be accounted worthy by the Father to be raised from the dead on the third day? Or had he failed, or should he fail, even in some slightest particular, and thus be accounted unworthy of resurrection and thus become extinct? No wonder these weighty matters bore in upon our dear Redeemer's heart with unsurmountable sorrows, so that he offered up strong cryings and tears unto him who was able to save him from death [by a resurrection].

Matthew says he prayed, "If it be possible let this cup pass from me;" Mark says he prayed, "All things are possible;" Luke records it, "If thou be willing," and the substance of all is that our Lord was exceeding fearful of himself—fearful lest he should make a misstep and thus spoil the entire plan of God, which he had so obediently undertaken and thus far so loyally performed. Apparently death in any form would have been sufficient as a ransom for the first Adam's disobedience, meeting his death penalty; but it had pleased the Father to put his Son, the Redeemer, to the extremest of all tests, laying upon him the ignominy, the shame, of the cross. Our Lord's query was, Could he stand this? or would it be possible for the Father to deviate to that extent without interfering with the divine plan or the great work being accomplished? The necessary submission is indicated—"Not my will but thine be done."

He Was Heard Respecting the Thing Feared

The Apostle declares that our Lord was heard, that is, answered, in respect to the thing he feared—in respect to the cross and the recovery out of death. Prayers for help or deliverance from these troubles may be answered in two ways: The Father may remove the disturbing cause, or he may so strengthen us that we will be able to quite overcome the disturbance. And with us, as with the Master, the Father usually takes the latter course, and gives us the peace and strength through his assurance in his Word. Thus we read of our Master that an angel appeared unto him strengthening him. We know not what message that angel brought to our dear Redeemer in his hour of loneliness and violent grief, nor is it necessary that we should: it is sufficient for us to know that the Father answered the prayer, that it was heard respecting the thing feared, that the fear was all removed, that calm reigned in our dear Redeemer's bosom thereafter, so that in all the affairs and incidents of that night and the following day he was of all men the coolest and calmest. We can surmise that the Father's assurance through the angel was that he had the divine favor, that up to that moment he had been faithful, that he had the Father's smile, and that he would be fully able to meet, when the time would come, all the exigencies of the hour of trial before him. With the assurance of the Father's approval no wonder sorrow took its flight, no wonder, hope, joy, love and peace streamed into the dear Redeemer's heart, and he returned to the disciples ready for the events that he knew were about to transpire.

"Let Us Also Fear"

It is well that the Lord's people strive to live a rejoicing life, giving thanks always to the Father in all things, and rejoicing to be counted worthy to suffer shame, etc., for the cause of Christ. But as the Apostle elsewhere declares, Let us rejoice with fear: let not our rejoicing be of that reckless, self-satisfying kind which might ensnare us and entrap us; let our rejoicing be in him who loved us and who bought us and who is ever present with us, our best Friend and truest Guide. Let us rejoice, not in feelings of our own strength and courage and wisdom, but in the fact that we have a Savior and a great one, who is able to deliver to the uttermost all that come unto the Father through him. Thus may the Lord be our strength, our confidence, our shield, our buckler.

In our Lord's case we read that "He trod the wine-press alone, of the people there was none with him." In his very saddest hour, when he most needed comfort and consolation, it was not possible for even the closest and dearest of his earthly friends to enter into his feelings or sympathize with him. How different with us! We are not so different from others that they cannot enter into our joys and sorrows, our hopes and fears, if they have been begotten of the same Spirit and instructed in the same school of Christ. With us human counsel and sympathy are both possible and proper. Indeed this is the divine provision as set forth in the Scriptures, which assure us that the Lord desires that we should comfort one another and build one another up as members of the body of Christ. Nevertheless we should never neglect the throne of heavenly grace in personal interview with our Father and glorified Lord. Whatever of earthly companionship we may have, the Lord's companionship must never be underestimated or forgotten. The Lord sometimes sends his angels to us to comfort us, to give us the assurance of his love and to point out to us the sureness of our confidence, our hope. But it is not necessary any longer to send a heavenly messenger, for already the Lord has on the earth angels—messengers, members of the body of Christ—imbued with the Master's Spirit and love, and ready always and anxious to speak the kind word, to bind up the broken heart, to pour in the oil and wine of consolation and joy, and in every way to represent to us the Master himself. What joy often comes through such ministries, what blessing we have received in this manner, and what a privilege we have when occasion offers to be thus used of the Lord as his ministers of joy and peace and blessing to the fellow-members! Let us be on the alert that no such opportunity pass us by.

The Apostle intimates that we have need of fearing the same thing that Jesus feared when he says, "Let us also fear lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of us should seem to come short of it." As New Creatures we have tasted of the new life, the heavenly life: our eyes of understanding have to some extent been opened to see the grandeurs and beauties of the heavenly things which God hath in reservation for them that love him. And we, too, realize that our attainment to the glory, honor, immortality and joint-heirship with the Lord depends upon our faithfulness to our covenant of sacrifice. If faithful, we know that he is faithful who has promised; if unfaithful, we know that we shall fail of that prize. What manner of persons ought we then to be under these conditions? Let us fear the loss of such a wonderful prospect of glory, honor and immortality, in the sense that we will seek constantly to fulfil our covenant and to abide in our Father's love and in our Redeemer's favor and smile. All who are thus walking carefully may have their moments in which they will experience something of the shadows of Gethsemane loneliness, for their testing, for their proving, and to develop in them the proper fear necessary to their full knowledge, to their appreciation of the situation and to faithfulness.

"Sleep on Now"

During that hour of intense mental agony our Lord prayed and prayed again, and in the interim came to his disciples, doubtless craving such sympathy as they would be able to give; but he found them asleep, their eyes being heavy from sorrow, says the Evangelist. The hour was midnight; they were sharing his sorrows, but unable to appreciate them rightly. The Master chided, probably especially Peter, when he said, "What, could you not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation." The noble Peter had but a short time before declared, "Lord, though all men forsake thee, yet will not I," and even now he had the sword which he subsequently used in seeking to defend the Lord, and yet he did not realize the importance of the hour; he knew not, as the Master did, how serious were the testings and how close; he knew not that it was a very short time until the Master's words would be fulfilled, "Before the cock crow thou shalt deny me thrice." Ah, had he realized as the Master did the trials that were near, how vigilant he doubtless would have been! And is it not so with us today? Are we not as the Lord's people drawing close to the Gethsemane hour of the Church? Are we not already in the hour of temptation to a considerable extent? Will not the last members of the body soon follow the Head unto complete sacrifice? How ready are we for the ordeal? Are we asleep, or are we heeding the words of the Apostle, They that sleep sleep in the night, but we who are of the day should be awake, sober, putting on the whole armor of God that we may be able to stand in this evil day, in the time of trial already upon us, and in the still severer trials which no doubt will be ours in the near future? Are we prepared for the time when there will possibly be a general scattering, as these "all forsook him and fled"? How courageous we will be in our hour of trial will probably depend much upon our following the Master's example and securing first of all that **positive conviction** that we have the divine approval. Let us not then avoid the Gethsemane moment if it come to us in the Lord's providence, but let us also with strong cryings and tears look up to him who is able to save us out of death by the glorious First Resurrection, and let us remember that we have an Advocate, we have a helper. The Lord is our angel who speaks to us the Father's message, telling us that if we abide in his love all will be right in the end, and that he is able and willing to bring us off conquerors, yea, more than conquerors through his own merit.

"The Spirit Is Willing, But the Flesh Is Weak"

This was our dear Redeemer's comment upon his disciples. He appreciated the fact that at heart they were loyal to him—he was not unmindful of their forsaking all to be his followers, he is not a hard Master, but on the contrary ever willing to accept our heart intentions, even where the flesh fails to come up to the perfect standard; and doubtless, therefore, his words, "Sleep on now, and take your rest," were not meant as sarcasm, but in very truth he wished that they might get a little rest, refreshment, in view of the ordeals of the day approaching. But not long did they rest until the trial was upon them. Judas guided a multitude seeking for Jesus —not Roman soldiers, but a multitude, a rabble of the curious, with certain servants of the High Priest, who was also a Judge. These, then, were court officers, an impromptu sheriff's posse, that came upon Jesus in the garden and arrested him by night, fearing that an arrest in daylight would create a disturbance at a time when the city was full of visitors to the Passover, and when disturbances were rather to be expected, and by the officers of the law sought to be carefully avoided.

Judas either knew the garden as a spot frequented by Jesus and the disciples, or had learned at the Supper where the company intended to go subsequently. When Satan entered into him and he resolved to earn the thirty pieces of silver by betraying the Lord, he left the gathered company at the Passover Feast and went to the chief priests and bargained with them, and now, as the result of that engagement, he came forward in advance of the multitude mentioned to meet Jesus and to indicate to the soldiers the one they wished to apprehend. As he approached he saluted, saying, "Hail, Rabbi," and kissed him. The Greek indicates that he kissed him repeatedly. Jesus received these expressions that belong to love, and knew that they were traitorous, yet made no evil retort. Instead he most kindly and respectfully said, "Friend, do that for which thou art come." The word "friend" does not signify loving friend—it is not from the Greek word **philos**, beloved, but from **hetaire**, which signifies comrade or partner.

Avoid the Judas Spirit

Truly every disciple of Christ, realizing that the issue is with himself, will desire to follow such a course as will insure against his ever becoming a Judas to the Lord and his cause. God's foreknowledge that one of the twelve would prove a traitor, not only receiving the grace of God in vain, but using it in a most villainous manner, was not the cause of Judas' fall. The Apostle says, "The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." (2 Tim. 2:19.) It is for us to determine how the favors of God shall be received and used, and God's foreknowledge in no sense of the word influences us.

We have every reason to suppose that Judas at the beginning of his career as a disciple was sincere. We may safely conclude that the gross deflection of his heart and character manifested at last came upon him gradually—that it began with the merest suggestion and ended with the most awful tragedy. The suggestion was probably along the line of selfishness; that he was not sufficiently honored amongst the twelve; that our Lord seemed to have a preference for Peter, James and John, and thus showed his lack of superior knowledge and ability—discernment. Doubtless Judas encouraged his own spirit of criticism. Self-complacent, he no doubt thought he saw places where Jesus and the others erred in judgment, failed to take advantage of opportunities, probably said the wrong word at the right time, etc., etc. Such a heady spirit, such a critical spirit, such a self-satisfied spirit, such a selfish spirit always go before a fall. The history of the Church as well as our individual experiences attest this.

When Judas perceived that the cause of Christ was not prospering—that Jesus not only did not respond to the suggestions of the multitudes here and there that he become a king, but that on the contrary his mind turned in another direction, anticipating violence from the rulers of the Jews, the suggestion probably came to Judas that it was time to begin to "feather his own nest," so that when the disruption would come he would be one of the party who would gain and not lose by his experiences as a disciple. Thus selfishness was in control of his mind and led him to pilfering, as it is written, "He was a thief, and carried the bag." That is to say, he was the treasurer of the little company, and appropriated some of the funds to his own personal account. We can even suppose that in his perfidy he exonerated his theft with the thought that he had been giving his valuable time to the cause, and that what he took would not more than reimburse him the value thereof. Such is the spirit of selfishness, the very reverse of the Spirit of the Lord—the spirit of self-sacrifice and whole-souled service to the Truth. Whoever has this spirit in any measure has the Judas spirit to that extent, and the result will surely be evil whether it amounts to such an awful result as that of Judas or not.

Our Lord declares that his faithful members in the world represent him, and that anything done against them is done against him. We may be sure, therefore, that the Judas spirit of selfishness even today might lead to betrayal of the Lord by the betrayal and injury of one of the least of his followers. Nor should it surprise us that these representatives of the Judas spirit follow his course even to the extent of betraying with a kiss, and ofttimes profess great love and respect for the members of the body of Christ, whom they secretly smite for their personal gain, or in an endeavor to gain place or influence or other selfish aggrandizement. Let each follower of the Lord apply to himself exactly Judas' words, saying, "Lord, is it I?" And let us each examine our own hearts to see to what extent anything of this Judas spirit might be lurking there, seeking a favorable moment to entrap us and destroy us as New Creatures.—Z. '06:346-349.

The Law of the New Creation

THE Scriptures everywhere represent that in God's estimation love is the principal thing. Neither justice nor other qualities, other virtues, are ignored; but this quality is placed at the very top of the list of Christian graces. From the list which the Apostle Paul gives of the fruits of the Holy Spirit, we see that at the head he places love, then come joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-restraint. (Galatians 5:22, 23.) The Apostle Peter gives the list of fruits of the Spirit as cumulative—as a process of addition, leading up to the sum of all the graces. He begins with faith, the foundation. Then are to be diligently added, fortitude, knowledge, self-restraint, patience, brotherly love, then the love which includes all the world, even our enemies.

We are to remember, however, that love is not something which is instantly developed. It grows. Therefore those who have some love today, something of this Holy Spirit, may have more of it tomorrow, still more of it in a year; for it is a matter of development. Since God Himself is love, the implanting of the Divine likeness in humanity six thousand years ago when Father Adam was created signifies that God gave man the quality of love. Even in man's fallen condition we see this manifested more or less on every hand—natural love. This in many cases has become considerably perverted into self-love. But there are some very noble people who have a considerable degree of love naturally, who have much of original Godlikeness still remaining. They have much less to overcome in this direction than those who are more selfish. All the elements of sin seem to be more or less connected with selfishness—thus warring against the best interests of the individual.

The love which the Bible commends to us as New Creatures is the love which had its start in our spirit-begetting. Whoever has been begotten of the Spirit of God has some of this pure, unselfish love of which St. Paul speaks. In proportion as one grows as a New Creature, he grows in love—so that he may gradually be filled, his capacity for love increasing in proportion to his growth. At the beginning of our Christian experience, we merely have a beginning of love, as it were. This is to spread and fill our whole system. This love of God will make us more loving, kind, gentle, toward our friends, toward everybody, even toward animals.

But the Scriptures draw attention to the fact that as the love of God develops in us we will have a special interest in the brethren—those who have received the same Spirit. Therefore, wherever the Spirit of God is it will have a sympathetic flow toward others of the same spirit. Whoever has the Spirit of God at all will be sure to love his brethren, because he will see the mind of God in them; and this love will increase as he develops and as he sees development in the brethren.

All the brethren in Christ, however, have imperfect bodies, and therefore can give but imperfect expression to the spirit of love. And since the brethren are brought closer together through their common hopes and ambitions, they are likely to become more of a trial to each other than are the world. They are tempted sometimes to say to a brother or a sister, "Well, you do not show much of the spirit of love!" Thus the spirit of criticism is aroused, and love is put to the test. In proportion as we grow in love, this spirit of love will be ours and we shall take a kindlier view of the frailties of the brethren. Our daily experiences should teach us more and more of our own shortcomings. The discovery of our own faults and the battling with them should humble us. Whoever realizes his own shortcomings should extend the feeling of sympathy toward his fellow pilgrims in the Heavenly way, who are fighting similar battles. Unless we do so we shall not be pleasing to our God.

The fact that the brethren have this Spirit of God and are seeking to develop love, however much they may come short of their own ideals and of our ideals for them, demands that we love them. Our sympathy for them must deepen so that if we see them overtaken in a fault we shall seek to restore them in love, remembering ourselves, lest we also be tempted. As to the depth of love we should manifest, it is clearly laid down in the Scriptures. We should love the brethren as Christ loved us. Christ loved us to the extent that He was willing to lay down His life for us. We should be full of love, sympathy, for our brethren in Christ, desiring to be helpful to them. Whatever we do for them is a manifestation of our love for the Lord.

The Lord has arranged that our love for the brethren and our laying down our lives for them and in their defense is all done to Him; and He so esteems it. If the time should come when it would be necessary, there should be a readiness to lay down our lives for them. **But more particularly,** we are to lay these down inch by inch in their service, whether it be by cleaning off the snow from the pavement, or caring for them when they are ill, or cooking the dinner or the breakfast, or mailing papers to them to encourage them in the good way—no matter what the service. All these ways and many others are ministries to those who are the Lord's—laying down our lives for them. We rejoice to have such privileges, such opportunities—using our time and strength as the Lord in His providence shall indicate, realizing that the only use we have for our present life is to lay it down in the service of the Lord's brethren and ours, and to do good to any as we have opportunity, giving the brethren the preference.

We may never attain to the place, while we are in the flesh, where we shall say no word, do no act, to hurt a brother. We all have imperfections that we are striving against. But "The Lord looketh upon the heart," and not at the imperfect execution. If He sees the earnest endeavor to do His will, He will cover the deficiencies and imperfections with the merit of our Savior. If we make a mistake, we are to be glad to rectify it and to make proper apologies and reparation—assuring the brother that we did not mean to hurt his feelings. Or, if under temptation we felt less concern than we should about wounding him, we should ask pardon, confessing our sorrow, and then confess our fault at the Throne of Grace, asking forgiveness in Jesus' name.

If, then, we hope to be of those who will be granted a place with Christ in His Throne, let us see to it that by His grace we attain the end of the commandment, the end of the Law, as given to the New Creation. Let it be "love out of a pure heart, and a good conscience, and an undissembled faith"—a love which inspires to the willing, joyful sacrifice of every earthly hope and ambition, and which gladly lays down even life itself for the brethren, that we may be accounted worthy of the heavenly inheritance awaiting the "more than conquerors."—Romans 8:37; Z. '15:262, 263.

"Truth is Stranger than Fiction"

(Continued from O.C.G. No. 78.)

I REJOICED to find others coming to the same advanced position, but was astonished to find the statement very cautiously set forth, that the editor believed the prophecies to indicate that the Lord was already **present** in the world (unseen and invisible), and that the harvest work of gathering the wheat was already due,—and that this view was warranted by the time-prophecies which but a few months before he supposed had failed.

Here was a new thought: Could it be that the **time prophecies** which I had so long despised, because of their misuse by Adventists, were really meant to indicate when the Lord would be **invisibly present** to set up his Kingdom—a thing which I clearly saw could be known in no other way? It seemed, to say the least, a reasonable, a very reasonable thing, to expect that the Lord would inform his people on the subject—especially as he had promised that the faithful should not be left in darkness with the world, and that though the day of the Lord would come upon all others as a thief in the night (stealthily, unawares), it should not be so to the watching, earnest saints.—1 Thes. 5:4.

I recalled certain arguments used by my friend Jonas Wendell and other Adventists to prove that 1873 would witness the burning of the world, etc.—the chronology of the world showing that the six thousand years from Adam ended with the beginning of 1873—and other arguments drawn from the Scriptures and supposed to coincide. Could it be that these **time** arguments, which I had passed by as unworthy of attention, really contained an important truth which they had misapplied?

Anxious to learn, from any quarter, whatever God had to teach, I at once wrote to Mr. Barbour, informing him of my harmony on other points and desiring to know particularly why, and upon what Scriptural evidences, he held that Christ's **presence** and the harvesting of the Gospel age dated from the Autumn of 1874. The answer showed that my surmise had been correct, viz.: that the **time arguments,** chronology, etc., were the same as used by Second Adventists in 1873, and explained how Mr. Barbour and Mr. J. H. Paton, of Michigan, a coworker with him, had been regular Second Adventists up to that time; and that when the date 1874 had passed without the world being burned, and without their seeing Christ in the flesh, they were for a time dumb-founded. They had examined the time-prophecies that had seemingly passed unfulfilled, and had been unable to find any flaw, and had begun to wonder whether the **time** was right and their **expectations wrong,**—whether the views of restitution and blessing to the world, which myself and others were teaching, might not be the things to look for. It seems that not long after their 1874 disappointment, a reader of the **Herald of the Morning,** who had a copy of the **Diaglott,** noticed something in it which he thought peculiar,—that in Matt. 24:27, 37, 39, the word which in our common version is rendered **coming** is translated **presence.** This was the clue; and, following it, they had been led through prophetic **time** toward proper views regarding the object and manner of the Lord's return. I, on the contrary, was led first to proper views of the object and manner of our Lord's return and then to the examination of the **time** for these things, indicated in God's word. Thus God leads his children often from different starting points of truth; but where the heart is earnest and trustful, the result must be to draw all such together.

But there were no books or other publications setting forth the time-prophecies as then understood, so I paid Mr. Barbour's expenses to come to see me at Philadelphia (where I had business engagements during the summer of 1876), to show me fully and Scripturally, if he could, that the prophecies indicated 1874 as the date at which the Lord's **presence** and "the harvest" began. He came, and the evidences satisfied me. Being a person of positive convictions and fully consecrated to the Lord, I at once saw that the special times in which we live have an important bearing upon our duty and work as Christ's disciples; that, being in the time of harvest, the harvest-work should be done; and that **Present Truth** was the sickle by which the Lord would have us do a gathering and reaping work everywhere among his children.

I inquired of Mr. Barbour as to what was being done by him and by the **Herald.** He replied that nothing was being done; that the readers of the **Herald,** being disappointed Adventists, had nearly all lost interest and stopped their subscriptions;—and that thus, with money exhausted, the **Herald** might be said to be practically suspended. I told him that instead of feeling discouraged and giving up the work since his newly found light on restitution (for when we first met, he had much to learn from me on the fulness of **restitution** based upon the sufficiency of the ransom given for all, as I had much to learn from him concerning **time**), he should rather feel that now he had some good tidings to preach, such as he never had before, and that his zeal should be correspondingly increased. At the same time, the knowledge of the fact that we were already in the harvest period gave to me an impetus to spread the Truth such as I never had before. I therefore at once resolved upon a vigorous campaign for the Truth.

I determined to curtail my business cares and give my time as well as means to the great harvest work. Accordingly, I sent Mr. Barbour back to his home, with money and instructions to prepare in concise book-form the good tidings so far as then understood, including the time features, while I closed out my Philadelphia business preparatory to engaging in the work, as I afterward did, traveling and preaching.

The little book of 196 pages thus prepared was entitled **The Three Worlds;** and as I was enabled to give some time and thought to its preparation it was issued by us both jointly, both names appearing on its title page—though it was mainly written by Mr. Barbour. While it was not the first book to teach a measure of restitution, nor the first to treat upon time-prophecy, it was, we believe, the first to **combine** the idea of restitution with time-prophecy. From the sale of this book and from my purse, our traveling expenses, etc., were met. After a time I conceived the idea of adding another harvest laborer and sent for Mr. Paton, who promptly responded and whose traveling expenses were met in the same manner.

But noticing how quickly people seemed to forget what they had heard, it soon became evident that while the meetings were useful in awakening interest, a monthly journal was needed to hold that interest and develop it. It therefore seemed to be the Lord's will that one of our number should settle somewhere and begin again the regular issuing of the **Herald of the Morning.** I suggested that Mr. Barbour do this, as he had experience as a typesetter and could therefore do it most economically, while Mr. Paton and I would continue to travel and contribute to its columns as we should find opportunity. To the objection that the type was sold, and that the few subscriptions which would come in would not, for a long time, make the journal self-sustaining, I replied that I would supply the money for purchasing type, etc., and leave a few hundred dollars in bank subject to Mr. Barbour's check, and that he should manage it as economically as possible, while Mr. Paton and I continued to travel. This, which seemed to be the Lord's will in the matter, was done.

It was after this, while on a tour of the New England States, that I met Mr. A. P. Adams, then a young Methodist minister, who became deeply interested and accepted the message heartily during the week that I preached to his congregation. Subsequently, I introduced him to little gatherings of interested ones in neighboring towns, and assisted otherwise, as I could, rejoicing in another one who, with study, would soon be a co-laborer in the harvest field. About this time, too, I was much encouraged by the accession of Mr. A. D. Jones, then a clerk in my employ in Pittsburg—a young man of activity and promise, who soon developed into an active and appreciated co-laborer in the harvest work, and is remembered by some of our readers. Mr. Jones ran well for a time, but ambition or something eventually worked utter shipwreck of his faith, and left us a painful illustration of the wisdom of the Apostle's words: "My brethren, be not many of you teachers, knowing that we shall have the severer judgment."—James 3:1—Diaglott; Z. '06:230, 231.

(Continued in O.C.G. No. 80.)

KERNELS KERNELS KERNELS

In proportion as we learn to appreciate the Father's will and to copy the principles underlying the Divine Character, we as New Creatures are "changed" from glory to glory of heart quality. And thus changed in our hearts, our minds, our wills, our conduct, we become fit or "meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light."—Col. 1:12; Z. '12:241.

◆

No matter how heavy may seem the cross, how severe the trial, or how weak we feel in consideration of it, if we simply and sincerely surrender ourselves to God, he will carry us through: with him, with his grace and guidance, it is possible for the weakest and the most severely tempted and tried to make their calling and election sure. He will infuse courage into fainting souls; he will apply the balm of his consolation to wounded hearts; he will grant wisdom to him that asketh it.—Z. '95:48.

◆

Christian common sense is good mental perception under the control of a heart in harmony with truth and righteousness, which notes the principles and precepts of the divine law and purpose, accepts God's wisdom as to utility and propriety, and from this high standpoint judges of truth and righteousness, and acts accordingly. If a particular course of action be proposed, Christian common sense perceives its merits or demerits according to the principles and teachings of God's Word; and so, likewise, if a doctrine be announced as divine truth, Christian common sense applies to it the tests of the inspired law and testimony and decides upon its truth or falsity accordingly.—Z. '95:53.

◆

While seeing error flourish often in high as well as in low places, we are reminded of the grand truth expressed upon the old seal of the Huguenots. It represented an anvil with broken hammers scattered all around it, and bore this legend:

"Hammer away ye hostile bands!
Your hammers break,
God's anvil stands."—Z. '95:152.

◆

Shall we not reckon that He who was careful in the past, who will delight in giving blessings in the future, is now ready and willing to pour out to each of us as his children blessings, specially spiritual, to the extent of our willingness and faith to receive? . . . May we not expect of the Lord continually, day by day, the blessings and favors which he assures us he is well pleased to bestow upon us. Surely faith can trust him, come what may.—Z. '04:283.

◆

The easiest and best explanation of the "feast" now spread before us as the Lord's "household of faith" (indeed the only reasonable one) is that the Lord is now fulfilling his promise recorded in Luke 12:37: "Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself (as their servant) and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them." While these "things new and old" are handed from one servant to another and to the entire household, can any of us doubt that the Master himself is dispensing the delicious viands which so refresh us?—Z. '04:251.

◆

No affair of life that comes to the Lord's people, sorrow or anguish or distress of mind in any sense, is too small to bring to the Lord. "Cast all your care upon the Lord, for he careth for you," is a very consoling and very encouraging suggestion from the Word.—Z. '01:237.

◆

The reward of the Ancient Worthies will be glorious.—Z. '13:332.

◆

The fact that the Vision is now speaking, and is made plain upon tables, is very convincing. We believe truly that "the days are at hand, and the effect (matter or thing (as spoken)) of every vision."—Ezek. 12:21-23; Z. '14:5.

◆

As our flesh is only reckonedly dead, and not actually, we are to be continually on guard. Our tongues are liable, unless carefully and prayerfully guarded, to speak slanderously or perhaps to make cutting remarks. All of our members are to be brought into harmony with God and His will. We are to have the sentiment of the hymn we often sing: "Let mine eyes see Jesus only."—Z. '16:229.

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J. WINTON.

Old Corn Gems

NUMBER EIGHTY

"And they did eat of the OLD CORN of the land on the morrow after the Passover . . . and the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the OLD CORN of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year." Joshua 5:11-12.

A SAFE RULE

"WHERE A BROTHER GIVES AN INTERPRETATION OF A SCRIPTURE WHICH DIFFERS FROM THAT GIVEN BY BROTHER RUSSELL, AND BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION SEEMS REASONABLE AND IN HARMONY WITH THE PLAN OF GOD, THEN WE BELIEVE IT A SAFE RULE TO FOLLOW BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION, FOR THE REASON THAT HE IS THE SERVANT OF THE CHURCH, SO CONSTITUTED BY THE LORD FOR THE LAODICEAN PERIOD; AND THEREFORE WE SHOULD EXPECT THE LORD TO TEACH US THROUGH HIM. WHERE THERE ARISES A DOUBT IN THE MIND AS TO WHICH INTERPRETATION IS CORRECT, THEN IT IS ALWAYS SAFER TO RESOLVE THAT DOUBT IN FAVOR OF BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION. WE BELIEVE SUCH TO BE IN HARMONY WITH THE LORD'S WILL." Z. '18:51.

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Jesus Walking on the Sea

(Matt. 14:22-33.)

"Of a truth thou art the Son of God."

THE LESSON respecting the feeding of above five thousand persons with five barley loaves and two small fish, and the twelve haversacks of fragments gathered, and the illustration this afforded of divine ability to care for the Lord's people, and at the same time the propriety of frugality on their part, was followed that same night by another miracle and another lesson. After the multitudes had been fed, toward the close of the day, they evidently were loth to leave the company of one so able and willing to care for their necessities, and probably it was to expedite their dispersion that our Lord urged the apostles to start in their boat for Capernaum.

Our Lord, after dispersing the multitude, sought the solitude of the mountain in prayer. Though he sometimes prayed with his disciples in their hearing, so that they recorded the words of his prayer, it is 2 evident that he was not content with merely these opportunities, but frequently sought the Father alone, as he has counseled his disciples to do, saying, "Enter into thy closet [private apartment] and pray to thy Father in secret." (Matt. 6:6.) All Christians of experience have realized the value of such secret personal communion with the heavenly Father, nor are we surprised that our Lord Jesus felt the need of a similar communion. His knowledge of the Father, and his fellowship with him before the world was made, so far from satisfying him and rendering prayer unnecessary, rather stimulated his desire for further fellowship and communion, especially as he was alone in the world—even his beloved disciples, not having yet been begotten of the spirit (John 7:39), could not enter into fellowship with him in respect to spiritual things, nor appreciate the trials which came to him as a perfect man, in a way in which they do not come to fallen humanity. He needed such fellowship with the heavenly Father for the refreshment of his own zeal, for the keeping warm of his own love and devotion, which was the basis of his consecration and his daily sacrificing of himself as a man, even unto death.

There is no intimation given that our Lord spent much time at prayer, morning and evening, yet we may reasonably suppose that he never neglected to seek the Father's face; but these brief seasons of worship and prayer daily were evidently supplemented 3 by occasions like the one mentioned in this lesson, in which our Lord spent, apparently, considerable of the night in prayer and communion with the Father. There is a lesson in this for the Lord's people. The duties of life, pressing ~~upon~~ us daily, are not to be neglected; each is to feel, as our Lord expressed it, "I must be about my Father's business," and this would imply, ordinarily, short prayers, which our Lord commended, saying, "When ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be ye not therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him." (Matt. 6:7, 8.) And the example of a prayer, given his disciples, is brief. Nevertheless, in proportion as we feel the importance of the great work in which, by the Lord's favor, we are privileged to be co-laborers with him, our hearts should be and will be drawn to seasons of spiritual communion;—not necessarily a prayer in the sense of making requests of the Father, for much of such seasons will doubtless be devoted to thanksgiving for the mercies and favors already experienced, and for the gracious promises upon which we base our faith for the future, and communion with the Lord, in the sense of pondering his will respecting us, and how we may most acceptably serve and please him.

While our Lord was thus holding communion with the Father, the apostles rowing the boat were having difficulty to make headway, a strong headwind having arisen, which made the lake very rough, boisterous, billowy. John, who was one of those in the boat, tells us that they had only gotten about twenty-five or thirty furlongs (two and a half to three miles) from the shore, in the several hours they had been rowing. This was what is termed the fourth watch of the night, ~~viz.,~~—between three and six o'clock in the morning. While thus rowing hard, worn and sleepy, they saw the figure of a man near them, walking on the water, and apparently intending to pass their boat. (Mark 6:48-50.) Some of them cried out in fear, thinking that they had seen a supernatural being, and that it foreboded some calamity, but it was Jesus who spoke to them, and set at rest their fears.

The boldness of Peter's faith was then most strikingly illustrated by his request that the Lord should bid him walk on the water; and having received the permission, his faith was so strong that he did walk for a few steps, until seemingly appalled by his own temerity and the boisterousness of the water, he began to sink, and cried to the Lord for help, which he received through touching the Lord's hand. If the miracle of the loaves attested the superhuman authority of our Lord, so likewise did this manifestation of his power attest the same; and if the former illustrated his power to protect his people from want and to supply all their necessities, this last manifested that divine power is unlimited and able to preserve his people in all the storms and difficulties and trials of life.

This is a good lesson for us to apply individually, realizing, as we all must, that our Lord has supernaturally fed us with spiritual food, and that during the darkness of the night-time which precedes the Millennial dawn and sunlight there will be storms and difficulties arising which would overwhelm us without the Lord's aid. We are to remember that not only the natural winds and waves obey his power and command, but that all the storms and billows of trouble and persecution which may impede and weary us are amenable to his control. The more we are able to realize this, the more of joy and peace we will experience, because the stronger will be our faith in him who is able to succor us and who has promised eventually to do so, and that meantime all things shall be overruled for our highest welfare, if we abide in him.

But the boat and the twelve toiling rowers, and the storm and darkness of the night, all picture still more perfectly the experiences of the Lord's people as a whole—not the experiences of a sectarian church, but the experiences of the one true Church, of which the Lord is the Head, the "Church of the First-born, whose names are written in heaven." (Heb. 12:23.) This true Church has indeed had a stormy time since parting with her Lord who ascended to the Father. The darkness came down upon them—darkness of error and superstition; and the great Adversary, through the Antichrist and many less antichrists, has aroused all through this Gospel age a great storm against the Lord's faithful few. The difficulties of their position have caused them to bend every effort to make progress against such fearful opposition, of which one of the apostles declares, "We wrestle not against flesh and blood [merely], but against principalities, and against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, and against wicked spirits in high positions." (Eph. 6:12.) This battle against adverse influences has continued throughout the nighttime of this Gospel age, and yet the Church has not reached the harbor nor has the storm abated.

As our Lord came to the disciples in the midst of the storm, in the fourth watch of the night (that is, in the early morning), so his second coming in the Millennial dawn is to the Church and to "help her," rescue her from her toil and weariness and peril, as the Prophet says, "The Lord shall help her early in the morning." (Psa. 46:5.) And as the manner of our Lord's coming to his disciples was different from that they had expected, so the manner of his second advent differs from what has been expected, and Peter would seem to represent a class living now, in the end of the age, who being fully convinced of the Lord's presence are privileged to walk to him by faith. But as Peter's faith was unequal to the occasion, except as the Lord came to his rescue, so all of the faithful now will need the Master's hand stretched to their relief, otherwise they would sink in discouragement, because of the lack of faith.

Is there not a good lesson here for all who have been faithfully laboring in self-control, and in the Lord's service, to bring all their thoughts and words and doings into full accord with the will of God in Christ, and who experience from the world and the flesh and the Adversary serious opposition as the Lord's people? The lesson here, in harmony with its presentations elsewhere in the Scriptures, is that little progress can be made by the Lord's people until the Master himself shall join them; and that then their blessedness and privileges will be proportioned to the measure of their faith. How strongly this speaks to us, then, of continued faithfulness and of growth in faith, not in ourselves but in the Lord, and of his ultimate deliverance of all who put their trust in him.

In John's account we learn that as soon as the Lord and Peter got into the boat, immediately the wind and storm ceased and the ship was at the harbor. So it will be with the Lord's people, the "little flock;" so soon as their faith has been fully tested at the Lord's second presence, he will join their number, and immediately the trials and storms, difficulties and oppositions will be at an end, and the desired haven of heavenly condition will have been reached, the Kingdom will have come. Courage, then, dear brother-mariners on the sea of experience. . . . Let us note carefully the Master's words to Peter as especially applicable to ourselves, viz., that all that will hinder us from walking out to meet the Lord is lack of faith. "O thou of little faith; wherefore didst thou doubt?"

Let us learn to trust the Lord, not only in the matters which pertain to his Church and all of its interests and affairs, but also in all of the matters and interests of ourselves and families. The lessons will be profitable to us, and prepare us for larger measures of divine favor, and for the joys of the Kingdom. And all this faith is based upon a clear realization of our Golden Text, viz., that our Lord Jesus is truly the Son of God. If the Son of God, he is true, and if he is true then all the exceeding great and precious promises which he left for us may be relied upon, built upon, anchored into; and such reliance in them will give us the faith requisite for the overcoming of all the difficulties and obstacles of life, that we may come off more than conquerors through him who loved us and who bought us with his own precious blood.—Z. '00: 184-186.

The Ransom and the Church

"The Man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a Ransom for all."—1 Tim. 2:6.

THE word Ransom is used in the Scriptures in two different senses. The one is represented in the above text. The other reads, "I will Ransom them from the power of the grave." (Hosea 13:14.) In the latter, the word Ransom signifies to recover from the grave, to deliver from the grave. As to the word Ransom in the first text, we understand it to refer to a Ransom-price, the Ransom-price of one man, the Ransom-price furnished by "the man Christ Jesus." Our Lord laid down that Ransom-price during the three and a half years between his consecration at Jordan and his death at Calvary; but he did not apply it at that time (but later when "he appeared in the presence of God for us," the Church class), nor has he yet applied it for the whole world. He will, however, apply it for the world "in due time." He is now imputing of his merit to a small class, so that they may be acceptable to the Father and have the privilege of participating in his sufferings—"filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ, for his Body's sake"—that they may have fellowship with him also in his great glory, in his great Office as Mediator between God and men.

Thus the Church will have a share with her Lord in the sufferings of the present time that she may be a part of the Sin-Offerings. This does not imply that they will have a share in the Ransom-price, because one man is the Ransom-price, and **not many men**. The Church's share, therefore, as a part of the Sin-Offering is not to be confounded with our Lord's work as a Ransom-price. Even in the Sin-Offering the Church does not offer the Sin-Offering. The High Priest **offered the bullock,** and the High Priest also **offered the goat.** It is not that the High Priest offered the bullock and the under-priests offered the goat—as though we offer or sacrifice ourselves. The utmost that we can do is to consecrate ourselves to be willing sacrifices. It then remains for the High Priest to come forth and impute of his merit in order to make an acceptable sacrifice of this class represented by the "goat." Thus it is seen that we do not share in the Sin-Offering in the sense as does our Lord. The High Priest's offering was of two parts, the "bullock" and the "goat"—the bullock representing his own person and the goat that of his followers.

Our Part in the Sin-Offering a Favor

Some one might inquire, Where, then, does the Church appear? We answer that the Church does not appear in the "goat"; but the consecrated human being is represented in the "goat" which was presented. When the sacrifice is made (the offering of the High Priest having been accepted), we become members of the High Priest, his under-priests. From that on, as **his** members, we have a participation with him in everything that is good, sacrificially and otherwise. But we have no **personal** identity in the Holy. It is the New Creature that is represented in the Holy, though not the New Creature as separate and apart from the High Priest, but as coming in under his robe, under his merit, as a member of his Body, according to the Divine arrangement.

Following out this thought: It is nowhere represented that we, the Church, will follow our Lord into the Most Holy as under-priests and there sprinkle our blood as the Lord sprinkled his blood. On the contrary, it was the High Priest who sprinkled the blood of the bullock and who, later, sprinkled the blood of the goat as that of his own Body. So we, as individuals, have nothing to do with that. Our individuality is lost as we become members of the Body of Christ and take his name. We are, therefore, to share his glory and his work.

"We Shall Be Like Him"

We do not mean, however, that we will **have no individuality** beyond the veil, because the Scriptures assure us that we shall be **like him.** The thought is that we will have no individuality in respect to the glorious Office. There is but the one Melchisedec Priest. All others are lost sight of. There will be the Priestly and Kingly Office and we shall share in all of it, in our relationship to him who is "the Head over all things to the Church, which is his Body." As individuals, therefore, we have nothing to do in the sacrificing. Any association that we have in the work of Sin-Offering, from the Divine standpoint, is all accredited to and included in the work of Christ—it is **his work.**

The participation of the Church in the Sin-Offering for the world is not due to any necessity that has arisen; but owing merely to the Divine arrangement, which permits us to come in with Christ and share in his glorious higher nature and work. The matter of suffering is purely a matter of favor for the Church, and entirely unnecessary. Jesus' death alone is all that was necessary for the release of the world from the Divine sentence of death.

It is, as we see, highly important that we keep clearly in mind the difference between our work of presenting our bodies as living sacrifices and our Lord's work, as the Great High Priest, in offering us sacrificially. The two matters are distinctly separate, as shown in the type. The goat was brought to the door of the Tabernacle and tied, picturing the Covenant of Sacrifice which we make. But the goat had not yet been offered and no one but the High Priest was qualified to make the sacrifice. The work of the High Priest in sacrificing the goat was the only sacrifice, in the proper sense of the word.

Even after the presentation of ourselves and the Father's acceptance, and after we have become New Creatures and are members of his Body, and, therefore, members of the Royal Priesthood, there is a continuous work—the presenting of ourselves daily. So the Lord Jesus has continued the offering all through this Gospel Age. He will finally complete this at the end of the Gospel Age, when the offering will all be finished as one sacrifice and the New Creatures will all be admitted as members of the glorified Body.—Z. '11:24, 25.

Greatest in the Kingdom

(Matthew 18:1-14.)

"In Heaven their angels do always behold the face of My Father."—V. 10.

PERHAPS IT WAS the fact that Peter, James and John had been favored more than the others on several occasions that led to the query which opens today's study: "Who, then, is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven?" They knew, of course, as St. Paul declares, that the Heavenly Father is above all, and that next to Him is our Lord Jesus Christ." "To us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by

Him." What the disciples wished to know was, which of them would be greatest, most influential, in Messiah's Kingdom, next to Himself.

Jesus, calling to him a little child, set him in the midst of them and said, "Verily I say unto you, except ye turn [from this spirit of self-seeking which your question implies] and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the Kingdom of Heaven"—you will have no part in it, you will not be fit. Whoever would be greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven should therefore become as humble as this little child.

A little child, unsophisticated, is ready to acknowledge its lack of wisdom. It asks questions, a thousand a day, perhaps as many as that in an hour; it seeks instruction; it does not profess and boast wisdom or knowledge—it is candid, it is truthful. It is in later years that it learns from its parents and others, untruthfulness, pride, bombast and various qualities which it did not possess at first. It may have possessed the disposition to pride and arrogance and haughtiness, etc., by heredity, but at first it was guileless, and "as a little child."

The Master's lesson is that whoever would become a child of God and be taught of God, and be eventually developed as a child of God, for the glorious position in the Kingdom to which we were called, must become childlike—must turn away from all pride, from selfish ambitions and hypocrisies and pretentions. They must confess their littleness and ignorance, and go humbly to the Lord for the necessary instruction.

Any who refuse to adopt this proper, childlike spirit will thus be refused the opportunities of the Kingdom, for God will have none others—none others can be taught of God, they will not learn the lessons necessary, under the arrangements of this present time. Here then is the standard of simplicity and artlessness which the Lord's people should adopt and should continue to allow to control them, regardless of their years and experiences. "Now we know in part"; we are dependent upon our Father and His instructions. We have entered the School of Christ, our Elder Brother; He is our Instructor; we must learn of Him, and to learn we must be in this proper, childlike attitude of mind.

"One Such Little Child"

We are not to understand that little children, however guileless, are members of Christ's Kingdom class, nor that the dear little ones dying in infancy will be members thereof. The Lord is seeking for mature men and women, who have a childlikeness of mind, a readiness to receive the Heavenly Father's Message, and who in gladness and simplicity of heart accept it. "Whoso shall receive one **such** little child in My name, receiveth Me"; whoever are My disciples are privileged to be God's little children, and thus to be My younger brothers; whoever will receive one such will be receiving Me. "Whosoever shall offend," or injure, "one of these little ones that believe in Me, it were better for him if a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were sunk in the depths of the sea."

If some one were thus drowned in the sea, it would indeed terminate his present life, but it would not at all endanger or influence his future life. A future life, by a Restitution awakening, is assured to Adam and every member of his race. Neither drowning nor any other form of death could possibly interfere with it. But he who would injure one of the Lord's little ones would thereby come under such a measure of Divine displeasure that it would affect his future interests beyond the grave, beyond his awakening. He would be held responsible for his deeds, even in the next life, in proportion as he realized what he was doing when he injured the Lord's saints.

The Lord declares that His faithful ones are as precious to Him as the apple of His eye, and that all their interests are subject to Divine supervision. He will allow nothing to happen to these; troubles permitted to come upon them will be only such as the Lord has foreseen and is able to make work out some blessing in connection with their preparation for the Kingdom. But even this fact will not excuse wilfulness on the part of those who do evil to the members of the Body of Jesus.

We remember the persecution of the saints by Saul of Tarsus. We remember Jesus said to him, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?" He answered, "Who art Thou, Lord?" And Jesus replied, "I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest." In persecuting the saints Saul of Tarsus had been persecuting Jesus, but because he did it ignorantly God had mercy upon him. Doubtless many saints from Jesus' day down have been persecuted ignorantly, and the Lord will have mercy upon those persecutors; but some of the persecutors have had such light, such knowledge, as to make them responsible; and it is of this class that our lesson speaks. Our Lord added a warning: "Woe unto the world because of offenses! It must needs be that offenses come; but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh."

Cut Off Hand or Foot

Here the Master brought in a saying which has perplexed many. "If thy foot cause thee to stumble, cut it off, and cast it from thee: it is better to enter life maimed, or halt, than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire. If thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better to enter into life with one eye, than that having two eyes thou be cast into Gehenna fire."

Those who fail to remember that Jesus spake to the people in parables, and never without a parable, will be liable to stumble over these words of His. His teaching is this: If you have anything in your make-up dear to you as a right hand or a foot or an eye, that is likely to cause you to stumble and fail to enter the Kingdom, you would better cut off that tendency, no matter what it costs, no matter how precious, no matter how great a hold it may have upon the very tendrils of your life. Would it not be better to enter into **life** than to go into Gehenna fire, that is, destruction, the Second Death? Surely this is true. Having put our hands to the plow, having even become followers of Jesus, we must either go on and be accepted as conquerors, or must perish.

There will, of course, be none in the Kingdom with but one eye, but the illustration is the same. If it should cost us the cutting off of some of our members, it would surely pay us to gain the eternal life in glory, even thus maimed, rather than to take the consequences of the Second Death, utter extinction. The lesson is that having begun as followers of Christ, and entered upon the contract and received a part of the reward, the Holy Spirit, the Divine favor, we cannot back out of the contract; we must go on to everlasting life or to everlasting death.

How careful the Lord's people should be not to stumble one another, even one of the least of the little ones who has accepted of Jesus and become His follower!—is the lesson. To illustrate it, Jesus suggested that any shepherd losing one of his sheep would leave all the others to go and seek that one; and he rejoices specially at its recovery. So we, the followers of Jesus, should be careful not to stumble each other, but rather to remember that we are all sheep under the great Shepherd, our Heavenly Father, and the great Under Shepherd, our Heavenly Lord, and that He has the spirit of loving interest and care which would go after the straying sheep, and that we should have this same spirit; and possessing this spirit, we would be very careful indeed not to stumble or hinder even the least of the Lord's followers.

All the Lord's true followers are God's "little ones," and are subject to special Divine supervision, represented in our text as angel care. The messengers who have guarded over the lives of God's saintly few always have access to the Heavenly Father's presence, to make known the necessities of those whom they represent, for Divine Power is ever on the alert for the protection of these. Oh, how blessed the privilege of being children of God. Oh, how wise to continue so little, so humble, so childlike, as to abide in His love, and to be enabled to learn the necessary lessons, and be ultimately received with Messiah in His Kingdom honor and glory!—Z. '12:346, 347.

"Perilous Times Shall Come"

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come."—2 Tim. 3:1.

WE ARE to distinguish clearly between the restraint of the fallen angels "in chains of darkness," and the binding of Satan, who is the Prince of demons. The binding of Satan, as the Scriptures set forth, is at the second coming of Christ: "And He laid hold of the dragon, that Old Serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years." (Rev. 20:2.) And during that thousand years Christ and His saints shall reign as Kings and Priests unto God. The restraint of the inferior angels is mentioned by St. Peter and St. Jude. Speaking of these fallen angels, St. Peter says, "Which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah."—2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6; 1 Pet. 3:20.

As we examine the Scriptures we see that there were angels of light who became disobedient, who left their primary estate as angels, and sought to become men, who assumed the human form. We find the record of them in Gen. 6:1-4: "The sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose." There were children born to them. "And there were giants in the earth in those days, . . . mighty men which were of old, men of renown." Then the whole world was filled with wickedness more than during the sixteen hundred preceding years. And God swept away all mankind except those saved in the ark.

Spirits Seek to Make Void the Word of God

The Apostle proceeds to show what was done with the angels who fell. They have less power, less privilege, than formerly. Then, they had the power of materialization, and could not only eat and drink, but perform all the functions of men. After the flood they were restrained in chains of darkness; that is to say, they were restrained from materialization and from working their power in light, as they had previously done. However, they were still working, as when Saul sought the witch of Endor to inquire as to how the battle would go.—1 Sam. 28:7-20.

The Prophet Isaiah says we should not have anything to do with those "who peep and mutter" and who pretend to have communication with the dead. (Isa. 8:19.) But these fallen angels seek to make void the Word of God; hence the various personations of the dead, as in the case of Samuel to Saul. It is not to be supposed that Samuel would come and give the information which God had said that Saul should not have. The same principle applies down to our day. The fallen angels have not been able to do their work except as they have gotten possession of human bodies by getting possession of their wills.

So we read in the New Testament that there are many possessed—not of devils, but of demons. Of these demons various accounts are given. When our Lord addressed the man who dwelt among the tombs, the Lord inquired, "What is thy name?" and the answer was, "Legion; for we are many." Not only one evil spirit had gotten into the man, but a host of them. When Jesus commanded them to come out of the man, they asked that they might go into the herd of swine. Jesus permitted them to go; and the swine ran down into the sea and were choked. It is recognized as a fact that swine are not easily stampeded. You could whip one of the swine, but if you want them to move, you must whip every one of them. Yet there were enough demons to enter the whole herd of swine.

The fallen spirits seem to be thoroughly degraded in their appetites and desires. And while they prefer to obsess human beings, yet, rather than have no animal body at all, they prefer, as shown in the foregoing, to have the bodies of swine. No doubt our Lord knew what the result would be. It was intended to give illustration as to what are valuable things for us to know: First, as to the number of evil spirits indicated by the number in the herd of swine; and, secondly, to demonstrate that they have no power to enter even into dumb animals, to show that poor, dumb creatures are free from them, and to demonstrate that they cannot trouble us except as we permit them, or tamper with, or allow our minds to come under their hypnotic or obsessing influence. . . .

Fallen Spirits Regaining Their Liberty

The question may be asked as to how it will be in the closing time of this Age. The Apostle tells us that these evil spirits are to be restrained until the judgment of the Great Day. What would seem to be implied? We answer that this is the Day of Christ, the thousand-year Day. As He has been dealing with the Church, so in the thousand years He will deal with the world., Messiah's Kingdom is the Kingdom for which we pray, "Thy Kingdom come!" The Apostle says that the fallen angels are restrained in chains of darkness until the Great Day. And so we find at this very time, this very Day, not only evidences of the inauguration of the New Dispensation—the blossoming of the wilderness, the electric light, and all the blessings belonging to this New Dispensation—but also the evidences that these fallen spirits are obtaining more liberty. We have reason to believe, on what we think reliable information, that there have been materializations.

Spiritualists claim that, more and more, spirits will exercise this power of materialization. They say that it will be only a little while until the dead will be walking around amongst the living. And materialization is only one of the powers which they can use. It is the fallen angels who are representing themselves as dead humans, in order to deceive and operate contrary to the Divine arrangement and Plan; and these are still working as adversaries of God and opponents of righteousness. We should not be much surprised if there are some very startling things—very wonderful things—to happen in the near future. If we get any conception of the time before the flood, we realize that the earth was full of violence. God perceived that the thoughts of men's minds were evil and only evil. And so today.

The Apostle tells us that in the dawning of this New Dispensation and the closing of this Gospel Age, men shall be truce-breakers—violent. He proceeds with an entire list. (2 Tim. 3:1-5.) This description is prophetic, we believe, of the time in which we are living. And this condition, we think, will be due largely to the evil spirits, just as in the days of Noah. Our Lord, giving an illustration of how things will be at His second coming, says that it will be as in the days of Noah—people will be eating and drinking, planting, etc. He mentions that people will be ignorant of the time of His coming; that as the flood came suddenly, so would come the time of the ushering in of the New Dispensation. Our thought is that probably there will be a good deal of similarity—not that the evil spirits will be able to break the bands, or chains, which have been put upon them, but that it will be part of God's Plan to let this happen. God has been restraining these evil spirits during the four thousand years since the flood.

Knowledge of the Truth a Safeguard

Speaking of ourself: if we were living today under the ordinary knowledge of mankind in general, and no more, we feel sure that we should not be able to maintain our position as a Christian. Our faith might waver: we might not be able to believe in the existence of God. But we think the hour is coming when there will be a test of this kind. Mankind will have reason to doubt whether there is any other God than nature, which is a very cruel god. Many are coming to believe even now that the Lord is merely a God of nature, and by processes of **evolution** has been creating the race in the earth. These will certainly come to a place where there will be a severe trial of faith.

Already many are falling; many are standing aloof from God and the Bible. Incidentally, the Lord describes that time when He says He will proceed to "do His work, **His strange work**"—the procedure which will seem most strange to mankind, causing great trials and difficulties to come upon the earth and upon the nominal Church systems and all who have identified themselves with nominal Church Christianity. Many will be thus caused to lose all faith. We know to expect these things and we have, therefore, blessing and keeping-power now. And perhaps we shall need this special help more in the next few years. Who can say? . . .

We have no doubt that the things which will be permitted will be very startling. Even to those who have the right understanding of the Divine Plan of the Ages, the things which will be permitted will be very strange. We are prepared for almost anything that might be told. We are convinced of the power of these evil spirits who pretend to do these various things. In fact, we can see that while materialization would be possible to them, a representation upon the mind would be much easier; it would be easier to paint a picture upon the brain.

The Lord's people should have on at all times the whole armor of God that they may be able to stand in this particularly evil day.—Z. '12:64-66.

A Lesson for Spiritual Israelites

(Malachi 3:7-12.)

HERE we have a part of the prophecy of Malachi which seemingly was applicable to fleshly Israel: the Lord reproves them, showing them that his course toward them as a people fully conformed to the engagements of their Covenant at Sinai. Had they remained faithful to him according to their agreement they might have had the great blessing even in Malachi's time. There is in this passage an exhortation for Israel to return to proper accord with the Lord, and to prove him that he would be as prompt and faithful in giving them blessings as he was prompt and faithful in giving them chastisements for their unfaithfulness. The Lord represents Israel as not being aware of their true condition, of not being aware of how they were failing to keep their Covenant. Their hearts had become so selfish, had been so stunted in development along all spiritual lines, that they apparently did not realize that they were merely praying to the Lord with their lips while their hearts were far from him. He points out to them that while keeping his ordinances in a certain outward and formalistic manner, they were not fulfilling the requirements of the Law as they should reasonably have understood them.

From the statement here made it would appear that, instead of coming to the Lord with the very best that they had as offerings to him and his cause, they were inclined to seek to perform the letter of the Law and to avoid its spirit; apparently they were ready to bring sacrifices and offerings, but the selfishness of their hearts and their lack of true appreciation of the Lord led them to proffer him the weak and the lame and the poor while they kept the better for their own use. The Lord urges upon them that they test him, prove him, and see whether or not he would grant them great blessings if they would but enter into the spirit of their consecration and offer unto the Lord the best of what they possessed.

Spiritual Israel, the Elijah class, the Lord's consecrated people still in the flesh . . . may gain a profitable lesson from these sharp criticisms of natural Israel. How is it with us? We as spiritual Israelites have vowed unto the Lord the first fruits, the very best, the very chiefest, the most valuable of all that we have and all that we are—of time, influence, talents, money, all. To what extent are we rendering unto the Lord our offerings and sacrifices in harmony with this our Covenant?

Is it not true respecting many spiritual Israelites that, instead of bringing the very best that they have to the Lord and to his service, they bring him merely the tail-ends, the imperfect things, offerings with which he is not well pleased. This is so in respect to all who use the best they have in self-gratification, in providing chiefly and best for their own natural conditions and appetites, honors, dignities, leaving for the Lord the remnants, the fag-ends of time, influence, reputation and money. Alas, we fear this is true of many Israelites today; they fail to grasp the thought that they have given their all to the Lord, and that what they have, therefore, is his, and that they are merely his stewards, pledged to him to use time, money, influence, all that he has committed to their care, as his and to his glory to the best of their knowledge and ability.

The argument which the Lord used to natural Israel was that, if they properly loved and respected him as their God, they would feel that they had nothing too good to offer to him and his service, and that it was a privilege on their part to be permitted to lay their little all at his feet, the very best that they had or could present. How much more true is this in respect to spiritual Israel, whose eyes of understanding have to some extent been opened, who are enabled to see the Lord from the new standpoint, to realize what great things he has done for us and what wonderful things he has proposed to give us if we show ourselves worthy of them by faithfulness to our Covenant obligations.

As our Lord pointed out to the Jews, he requires these things **not because he is needy**, for all the gold and silver and the cattle upon a thousand hills are his, but that he seeks in us evidences of our sincerity, our faithfulness in respect to our Covenant engagement when we pledged all that we possessed, houses, lands, father, mother, sisters, brothers, yea, life itself, to be all subjected to and laid at the feet of our Redeemer and Master, that we might at any cost, at any sacrifice, be permitted to render such service as he would accept, realizing the while that all that he would accept would be a reasonable service, and on our part it would be an offering far too small to be worthy of our King and our Creator.

"Prove Me Now Herewith."

The Lord's words to natural Israel should come to spiritual Israel with still greater force, "Prove me now herewith, saith the Lord." If any feel themselves poor, if any feel that spiritually they are lean, that they are not enjoying such fellowship with the Lord as they would desire, that they are unable to draw as closely to him as they would like, to all such the Lord says the fault is, You have neglected your covenant; here are my words, "Prove me," fulfil the terms of your Covenant, and see if I will not be faithful, and do for you exceedingly and abundantly more than you could have asked or thought.

It behooves us, dear friends, to look about us to note to what extent we have been faithful to our Covenant of sacrifice.and to remember that it is not a sacrifice for a day or a year but, "even unto death." "Be ye faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life." (Rev. 2:10.) A little while the trials will be over, but until that little while is past we are in the trial time, and it is proving us either worthy or unworthy of the glorious favors which we seek, the chief blessing, joint-heirship. If we appreciate it let us seek it in the Lord's way, let us see to what extent there are other things in our lives that we might render unto the Lord and which he will accept, not through the worthiness of the deeds or the sacrifices but through the merit of Christ. Let us see if the days and hours as they pass are spent in a consecrated manner; let us note to what extent moments and days are spent in some selfish manner, or wasted upon others beyond the reasonable requirements of duty as marked out in the divine Word. Let us see to what extent we perform our vows unto the Lord; let us take note of what of time or influence or money we are using, in the divine service and what proportion this bears to the whole.

Of the Jews the Lord required a tenth, a "tithe." Of the spiritual Israelites he makes no positive requirements but leaves it for us, that by the degree of our sacrifices, according to our abilities, we may demonstrate the measure of our love. But who would say that one-tenth of time, influence and talent would be enough for the spiritual Israelite to render to the Lord for all his benefits? Surely all would agree that a fourth would be a very small measure indeed as compared with our true obligation. All should feel that the sacrifice is a **whole** burnt offering, a **complete** sacrifice of every item and element of our talents and powers and privileges; all should feel that he may keep for use upon himself and for use upon those dependent upon him only such measure as would seem to be necessary to decency and reasonable comfort and not for what might be termed luxury or waste. Those who accept the Lord's proposition heartily, and render to him their all to the extent of their ability, will find their leanness departing and their joy of heart increasing more and more.—Z. '05: 379, 380.

"Truth is Stranger than Fiction"

(Continued from Old Corn Gems No. 79.)

Sifting as Wheat

"SATAN hath desired to have you, that he might sift you as wheat."—Luke 22:31.

Thus far all had run smoothly and onward: we had been greatly blessed with Truth, but not specially tested in our love and fidelity to it. But with the Spring of 1878, the parallel in time to the Lord's crucifixion and his utterance of the above-quoted words, the sifting began which has continued ever since, and which must, sooner or later, test every one who receives the light of Present Truth. "Marvel not, therefore, concerning the fiery trial which **shall try you,** as though some strange thing happened unto you:" for this "fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is"—whether he has built his faith flimsily of wood, hay and stubble, instead of with the valuable stones of God's revealed truth, or whether he has built it upon the shifting sands of human theory—evolution, etc.,—or upon the solid rock, the **ransom,** the only sure foundation, which God has provided. They who build upon that **rock** shall be safe personally, even though they may have built up an illogical faith which the "fire" and shaking of this day of trial shall overthrow and utterly consume; but they who build upon any other foundation, whether they use good or bad materials, are sure of complete wreck.—Luke 6:47-49; 1 Cor. 3:11-15.

The object of this trial and sifting evidently is to select all whose heart-desires are unselfish, who are fully and unreservedly consecrated to the Lord, who are so anxious to have the Lord's will done, and whose confidence in his wisdom, his way and his Word is so great, that they refuse to be led away from the Lord's Word, either by the sophistries of others, or by plans and ideas of their own. These, in the sifting time, will be strengthened and shall increase their joy in the Lord and their knowledge of his plans, even while their faith is being tested by the falling into error of thousands on every hand.—Psa. 91:7.

The sifting began thus: Regarding Paul's statement (1 Cor. 15:51, 52), "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed—in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," etc., we still held the idea which Adventists, and indeed all Christians hold, that at some time the living saints would be suddenly and miraculously caught away bodily, thenceforth to be forever with the Lord. And, now, our acquaintance with time-prophecy led us to expect this translation of the saints at the point of time in this age parallel to the Lord's resurrection: for many of the parallelisms between the Jewish and Christian dispensations were already seen by us, and formed one of the features of the little book above referred to—**The Three Worlds.**

We did not then see, as we now do, that that date (1878) marked the time for the beginning of the establishment of the Kingdom of God, by the glorification of all who already slept in Christ, and that the "change" which Paul mentions (1 Cor. 15:51) is to occur in the moment of dying, to all the class described, from that date onward through the harvest period, until all the living members ("the feet") of the body of Christ shall have been changed to glorious spirit beings. But when at that date nothing occurred which we could **see,** a re-examination of the matter showed me that our mistake lay in expecting to see all the living saints changed at once, and without dying—an erroneous view shared in by the whole nominal church, and one which we had not yet observed or discarded. Our present clear view was the result of the examination thus started. I soon saw that in the Apostle's words, "We shall not all **sleep,**" the word **sleep** was not synonymous with **die,** though generally so understood; that, on the contrary, the expression sleep, here used, represents **unconsciousness;** and that the Apostle wished us to understand that from a certain time in the Lord's **presence,** his saints, though they would all die like other men (Psa. 82:6, 7), would not remain for any time unconscious, but in the **moment** of dying would be **changed** and would receive the spirit body promised. Throughout this Gospel age, dying has been followed by **unconsciousness,** "sleep." This continued true of all saints who "fell asleep in Jesus" up to the time when he took the office of King (Rev. 11:17), which we have shown was in 1878.

Not only did the King at that date "awaken in his likeness" all the members of his body, the Church, who **slept,** but for the same reason (the time for establishing his Kingdom having come) it is no longer necessary that the "feet" or last remaining members should go into "sleep" or unconsciousness. On the contrary, each now, as he finishes his course, faithful unto death, will at once receive the crown of life, and, being changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, cannot be said to sleep, or to be unconscious at all. Here—1878—

Rev. 14:13 is applicable. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord **from henceforth.**"

So this re-examination showed further light upon the pathway and became a good cause for encouragement, as evidencing the Lord's continued leading.

But while I was thus helped to clearer views and brighter hopes, and while I diligently endeavored to help others, the Spring of 1878 proved far from a blessing to Mr. Barbour and to many under his influence. Rejecting the plain, simple solution presented above, Mr. B. seemed to feel that he must of necessity get up something new to divert attention from the failure of the living saints to be caught away en masse.

But, alas! how dangerous it is for any man to feel too much responsibility and to attempt to force new light. To our painful surprise, Mr. Barbour soon after wrote an article for the **Herald** denying the doctrine of the atonement—denying that the death of Christ was the ransom-price of Adam and his race, saying that Christ's death was no more a settlement of the penalty of man's sins than would the sticking of a pin through the body of a fly and causing it suffering and death be considered by an earthly parent as a just settlement for misdemeanor in his child.

I was astonished, supposing that Mr. B. had a clearer understanding of the work of Christ as our sin-offering, our willing Redeemer, who gladly, cooperating in the divine plan, gave himself as the **ransom or corresponding price** to meet the penalty upon Adam, that Adam and all his posterity might in due time go free from sin and death. A totally different thing indeed was the willing, intelligent, loving offering of our Redeemer, according to the plan devised and revealed by infinite wisdom, from the miserable caricature of it offered in the above illustration. I had either given Mr. B. credit for clearer views than he ever had, or else he was deliberately taking off and casting away the "wedding garment" of Christ's righteousness. The latter was the only conclusion left; for he afterward stated that he had previously recognized Christ's death as man's **ransom**-price.

Immediately I wrote an article for the **Herald** in contradiction of the error, showing the necessity "that one die for all"—"the just for the unjust;" that Christ fulfilled all this as it had been written; and that **consequently** God could be just and forgive and release the sinner from the very penalty he had justly imposed. (Rom. 3:26.) I also wrote to Mr. Paton, calling his attention to the fundamental character of the doctrine assailed, and pointing out how the time and circumstances all corresponded with the parable of the one who took off the wedding garment when just about to partake of the wedding feast. (Matt. 22:11-14.) He replied that he had not seen the **ransom** feature in so strong a light before; that Mr. Barbour had a strong, dogmatic way of putting things which had for the time overbalanced him. I urged that, seeing now the importance of the doctrine, he also write an article for the **Herald**, which, in no uncertain tone, would give his witness also for the precious blood of Christ. This he did. These articles appeared in the issues of the **Herald** from July to December, 1878.

It now became clear to me that the Lord would no longer have me assist financially, or to be in any way identified with, anything which cast any influence in opposition to the fundamental principle of our holy Christian religion; and I therefore, after a most careful though unavailing effort to reclaim the erring, withdrew entirely from the **Herald of the Morning** and from further fellowship with Mr. B. But a mere withdrawal I felt was not sufficient to show my continued loyalty to our Lord and Redeemer, whose cause had thus been violently assailed by one in position to lead the sheep astray —and in that position, too, very largely by my individual assistance and encouragement when I believed him to be, in all sincerity, true to the Lord. I therefore understood it to be the Lord's will that I should start another journal in which the standard of the cross should be lifted high, the doctrine of the ransom defended, and the good tidings of great joy proclaimed as extensively as possible.

Acting upon this leading of the Lord, I gave up traveling, and in July, 1879, the first number of Zion's Watch Tower **and Herald of Christ's Presence** made its appearance. From the first, it has been a special advocate of the "**ransom for all**," and by the grace of God we hope this it will ever be. —Z. '06:231-233.

(Continued in Old Corn Gems No. 81.)

KERNELS KERNELS KERNELS

Christian character cannot be maintained without prayer any more than a human life can be maintained without breathing.—Z. '11:411.

◆

The Lord wants true, loyal characters, **established in righteousness,** and these cannot be developed and demonstrated except by just such experiences as He gives His people.—Z. '13:292.

◆

God's people of today should be on the alert to discern in all of life's affairs, the will of the Lord. We surely should **know** that the Lord's wisdom and power are with the interests of Spiritual Israel in all of their affairs, in such a manner and to such a degree that human conspiracies and oppositions can work only harm to those who foment them. Though the Lord may permit these to go to great lengths and to have apparent success, as in the case of the conspiracy of the high priests and Scribes and Judas against our Lord, or in the case of Absalom and his coadjutors against King David; but the assurance given to all who have the faith to receive it is that "all things **must** work together for good to them who love God, who are the called ones according to his purpose," and that it must always be true in the case of all the Lord's people; as Jesus said to Pilate, "Thou couldst have no power at all except it were permitted thee of my Father."—Z. '08:357.

◆

Even when in "deep waters" Divine peace can dwell in our hearts and keep them.—Z. '11:397.

◆

When Satan beheld Adam and Eve placed under Divine favor in the Garden of Eden, and saw that they were the parents of an unborn race, the temptation came to him that, if he could get them on his side, then he would become a mighty one, a ruler. Why did this temptation come to him? He knew well that the thought was disloyal to his Creator. Why did he entertain it? Did it come to his mind in so powerful a manner as to make it **irresistible?** No. The Scriptures tell us that all of God's work is **perfect.** He made both man and angels perfect. Satan's deflection was through **his own mind.** While he knew that the **thoughts** in which he was indulging were unjust and unrighteous, he probably did not intend **to do evil.** No one **intends** to do **wrong,** but merely to see how the thing will **"work out."** So Satan thought how **possible** it would be and how **pleasurable.** Thus he allowed his mind to run on. And the things that he subsequently did he would not have allowed himself to do at the **beginning.**

So far as we know, this is the process of every mind. The fact that **sin develops** does not prove that there was a **germ of sin.** But an active mind always **plans.** God's mind is perfect and active; and so are the minds of the angels. As New Creatures it would be possible for us to cultivate or to allow to germinate in our minds certain thoughts, certain ambitions, certain imaginations, which would eventually lead us astray. It is the duty of every New Creature to **repudiate every thought that is disloyal to God or to His Laws.** The **loyalty of the mind** should be so great that anything contrary to God's will would be considered treason. This is the only safe position for the New Creature. Everything known to be disloyal should be discountenanced, fought against. For, as surely as evil things come in, progress is made toward destruction of the loyalty of the mind.—Z. '12:146.

◆

Some have been so long in the Truth that they think they understand it perfectly, while in reality they have forgotten nearly as much as they know. These are just in the attitude where a mixture of Truth and sophistry would be likely to catch them. And for aught we know it is a part of the Lord's will that they should be trapped and ensnared, because they have not received the Truth in the love of it—with a proper zeal.—2 Thess. 2:10; Z. '08:190, 191.

◆

Seeing that all the efforts of men to hide themselves "from the wrath of the Lamb" when the great day of his wrath shall have come will be in vain, the saints would best make no effort to hide their children, knowing that it would be folly. The trouble comes to overthrow sin and every false system and thing; and the lessons it brings will prove beneficial to mankind in general, breaking their idols and purging their hearts. If our children and friends need the purging, we should not wish to have them escape it. If they do not need it, we may rest assured that the Lord will permit the glorified members of his body, his Church, to care for their children and friends during that trouble and to succor them from all that would not be to their benefit. What more could we ask than that we should be their ministering guardians, far more able to help them than if with them in the flesh? The best provision which parents can make for their children is to give them, by precept and example, faithful instruction in **righteousness.** Remember that "the fear (reverence) of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."—Z. '96:82.

◆

"NONE RIGHTEOUS; NO, NOT ONE."

Perfection is a thing we cannot hope to find in any member of the human race. The Scriptures are clear upon this (Rom. 3:10), and when Jesus the Messiah is introduced it is especially pointed out that he was distinctly separate from the Adamic race—that his life came not from Adam but from the heavenly Father, and that, therefore, he was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners," suited to be the Redeemer of Adam and his race—able to give to God a ransom price. . . .

While God sets before us the standard of perfection, saying, "Walk thou before me and be thou perfect" (Gen. 17:1); and again, "Be ye perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Matt. 5:48), it is nowhere intimated that it is possible for us while still in the flesh to attain to such perfection. On the contrary it is clearly set forth in the Scriptures that the perfection that is possible to us is that of the heart, the mind, the will, the intent, which will insure the conduct of the mortal body being as nearly to this standard as possible.—Z. '07:45.

◆

The earnest, the zealous, the warm-hearted, are in no danger from snares. They are protected in various ways: (1) Their love for the Truth is so great that they would be continually feeding at the table of the Lord. Their perceptions of the Truth are correspondingly clear. Instead of forgetting half of what they knew, these are continually growing in grace and knowledge. (2) They are so satisfied with the Lord's provision of which they have been already partaking that they have no appetite for other food, and are not seeking for it.—Z. '08:191.

◆

We should be glad if our change should come soon, yet fully content if the Lord has further service for us and the change should be delayed. Those who experience the change the earlier will, of course, have in many respects the greater blessing for the time; but if the Lord has service for us on this side the vail let us be glad to do his will; let us be assured that he will grant sufficient grace for every experience of life.—Z. '08:174.

◆

"There is a pride that looks **up** with envy, as well as a pride that looks **down** with scorn." The Lord's followers are to remember that pride in any person, in any station, respecting any matter, is highly reprehensible in God's sight and displeasing to him. "The Lord resisteth the proud, but showeth his favor to the humble." Hence, all who would abide in the Lord's love have need to be very careful along this line—to keep very humble, very lowly in conduct, and particularly in mind.—Jas. 4:6; 1 Pet. 5:5; Z. '08:111.

◆

Our entire lives are to be so devoted to the Lord and to his cause, and our minds are to be so filled with appreciation of his goodness, and our faith in him is to be so constant and so bright, that we will always have in mind his will in every matter, and thus be in the praying attitude of heart continually. —Z. '05:297.

◆

It would be unwise to ask the Lord for earthly privileges and advantages of any kind, since this might work to their disadvantage as New Creatures. Rather they are to remember the words of our Lord, that all mankind are seeking after the earthly things, but that the Father knoweth the things we have need of before we ask him, without our asking him. The preferable attitude of heart for the Lord's consecrated people therefore is—O, Lord, thou knowest far better than I what would be for my highest welfare, my highest spiritual interest. Thou hast promised that all things shall work together for good to me because I am thine, because I have been called according to thy purpose. I entreat of thee give what is best in all of life's affairs and withhold whatever seems unto thee best—"Thy will be done." For the Lord's consecrated people to undertake to move Jehovah's arm in respect to their affairs would seem to be the taking of the rudder out of his hands—would seem to be more or less of self-will, which we have pledged to the Lord shall be dead that his will may be done in us.—Z. '05:202.

◆

When, therefore, the New Creatures in Christ Jesus find that they have numerous fiery trials, no matter along what lines these may come to them, they are to recognize them as evidences of their faithfulness—as evidences that God regards them as sons, and that they are being tested according to their covenant relationship, that they may be fitted and prepared for perfecting in spirit and the glories to follow. If, therefore, the Lord permits calamities to come upon such, let them not be regarded in the same light as if they befell the world. The world, under the divine sentence of death, is subject to various accidents and mutations, with which the Lord has nothing whatever to do, as explained by our Lord when he referred to the eighteen upon whom the tower of Siloam fell, and the others whose blood Pilate mingled with the sacrifices, and who our Lord declared were not, on account of these things, to be considered sinners above others and under divine reprobation. (Luke 13:1-5.) God permits the wrath of men and of Satan, within certain limits, in connection with the world of mankind; but in respect to his elect Church it is different. Nothing that befalls them is of accident. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." Not even a hair of their heads can fall without his notice. (Psa. 116:15; Matt. 10:30.) As our Lord declared to Pilate, when he asked, "Knowest thou not that I have power?"—"Thou couldst have no power at all, except it were given thee of my Father." (John 19:10, 11.) And this is equally true of every member of the body of Christ, from the moment of his begetting as a New Creature. Yea, we have every reason to believe that in some measure divine providence extends even beyond the New Creation to those whose lives and interests are closely linked to theirs. If, then, the New Creatures experience fiery trials they are not to think these peculiar, as though some strange thing happened unto them, but are to know that corresponding trials have happened to all the members of the body of Christ, from the Head downward, and will happen to all until the last members of the feet class have been tested, polished, accepted, glorified. If these, then, come in the nature of oppositions and persecutions in the home, or from former friends or neighbors, or from nominal church people, or if they come in the form of financial disaster and poverty, or if they come in the nature of sickness, pain, physical accident, etc., no matter how, the Lord's people are to be content, conscious of the Father's love and providential care in respect to their every interest. To have full confidence in this is a part of the test of faith. To be assured of the Lord that we are children, and heirs, and to be told of God's oversight, and at the same time to be permitted to suffer tribulations, is a severe test of faith in those who are required to walk by faith and not by sight if they would eventually be accepted as overcomers. Let us, then, receive with confidence, love and trust, whatever benefits or troubles the Lord's providence may send us and let us profit by them, learning their lessons.—F. 646, 647.

◆

Prayer is the vital breath of the New Creature. We cannot control, nor get the best out of our old bodies except we conform to our Lord's instruction to pray.—Z. '13:279.

◆

The clearness of our comprehension of the promises is to us the power of God working in us to strengthen us and to enable us to overcome present obstacles and trials. The exceeding great and precious promises are unfolded to us gradually, as we prove faithful and go on, in order that by these—by the strength and courage which they infuse—we may be enabled so to run as to obtain the prize. —2 Pet. 1:4; C. 220.

NOTICE

During the General Convention (April 14th to 17th) it was decided that the next General Convention be held in Vancouver, B.C., September 2nd, 3rd and 4th next.

Also the following motion was carried unanimously: "It is understood that the "Old Corn Gems" are printed only for those who are in harmony with the Standfast movement, and the circulating of it amongst others should therefore be discouraged."

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Old Corn Gems

NUMBER EIGHTY-ONE

"And they did eat of the OLD CORN of the land on the morrow after the Passover . . . and the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the OLD CORN of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year." Joshua 5:11-12.

A SAFE RULE

"WHERE A BROTHER GIVES AN INTERPRETATION OF A SCRIPTURE WHICH DIFFERS FROM THAT GIVEN BY BROTHER RUSSELL, AND BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION SEEMS REASONABLE AND IN HARMONY WITH THE PLAN OF GOD, THEN WE BELIEVE IT A SAFE RULE TO FOLLOW BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION, FOR THE REASON THAT HE IS THE SERVANT OF THE CHURCH, SO CONSTITUTED BY THE LORD FOR THE LAODICEAN PERIOD; AND THEREFORE WE SHOULD EXPECT THE LORD TO TEACH US THROUGH HIM. WHERE THERE ARISES A DOUBT IN THE MIND AS TO WHICH INTERPRETATION IS CORRECT, THEN IT IS ALWAYS SAFER TO RESOLVE THAT DOUBT IN FAVOR OF BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION. WE BELIEVE SUCH TO BE IN HARMONY WITH THE LORD'S WILL." Z. '18:51.

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Knowledge Necessary to Growth in Grace

"Ye have put off the old man with his deeds and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him who created him."—Col. 3:9, 10.

IN OUR TEXT the expression "put off" suggests the additional thought of **putting out.** As an illustration, let us consider Congress. When by a vote the party in power is put **out of power,** we do not understand that they are **put out of Congress.** One party which has been in control is to be superseded by the other party. Such a transfer would, in some respects, mean a new line of policy altogether.

So it is in the change of becoming New Creatures 2 in Christ, members of the Body of Messiah. In many things a radical change takes place. The new will must regulate what we shall eat, what we shall wear; in fact, it must be the ruling power over everything after we have become New Creatures, begotten of the Holy Spirit; for we have elected a new Head. The change of headship is an instantaneous work. There was a time when we were on the other side of the question. Finally we decided to come on the Lord's side, and accepted Him as our Head. At the moment we accepted the change the will of the flesh was put out of control and the new will installed in power. Then we became New Creatures. But we were undeveloped in character.

3 As when a new party comes into power in Congress that party cannot regulate things all at once, but by degrees effects the changes desired, so with the new mind. It gradually makes change after change, and thus the renewing work, the transforming work, goes on, the new mind gaining more control and bringing the thoughts, words and deeds under the supervision and direction of the Lord. As we come to know God better, we come to see His will better. More and more we come to see things from the Divine viewpoint and to regulate every word and every act of our life therefrom.

Through knowledge, as well as in knowledge, the New Creature is renewed or refreshed, built up, 4 made strong. The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. What the old mind had was the wisdom of this world. What the New Creature receives is the wisdom of God. The development of the different powers of the New Mind is a gradual work, dependent upon knowledge. With the new will the knowledge becomes the energizing and strengthening power, and finds opportunities by which the New Creature can accomplish its purpose. This knowledge is that which cometh from above. It is not merely the knowing how many chapters there are in the Bible, nor how many verses there are in the Bible and being able to quote them; but by the various providences of God in life, it is to come to such a knowledge of God that it is sufficient for His will to be made clear to us, to insure obedience. Our knowledge is increased in proportion as we give heed to the things which God has spoken; in proportion as we set our affections on things above and not on things on the earth.

The Terms Upon Which We Are Called 5

All Christians should **know** the terms and conditions upon which "God hath called" them, namely, (1) **To suffer with Christ** in the present time, and (2) To be glorified and reign with Him in the coming Age to bless the world. These should know both the reason for their suffering and the character which God would develop in them, without which they could not be "fit for the Kingdom." It is concerning these characteristics, "putting on the new man," necessary to those who would make their "calling and election sure," that our present lesson treats. Let us consider some of them.

"Let love be without dissimulation." St. Paul 6 had already explained the necessity for love, but now he puts us on guard against a merely feigned love, which would only outwardly appear kind and polite. The true spirit of love, the holy spirit, will not be a dissimulating one, a hypocritical one; **the love will be genuine, heart-felt, as well as mouth-expressed.** This love is to be toward God and toward all, in proportion as they are God-like, or striving to be so. It is to be a love of that which is good, right, pure, true.

"Abhor that which is evil." We are not merely 7 to **avoid doing** that which is evil, not merely to have no love or affinity for evil, but more than these, we are to **hate, to abhor** evil. As the love for God and for all things true and pure and making for righteousness is to be cultivated, so the abhorrence of sin and impurity of every kind is to be cultivated. Thus, the stronger we become in Christian character the more intense will become our love for the good, the pure and the true; and the more intense will be our opposition to the untrue, the impure, the sinful. The more we learn of the beautiful harmonies of this heavenly grace of love, and the more they become the melodies of our own hearts, the more distressing and repugnant and abhorrent will sin and selfishness, "the spirit of the world," be to us; just as discords in music grate upon our ears in proportion to our knowledge and appreciation of musical harmonies.

As holiness and sin are opposites, so our feeling 8 toward these must be represented by the sentiments of love and hatred. To grow cool in love for righteousness is to lose some of the abhorrence for sin. Let us, therefore, cultivate in ourselves hatred for sin, selfishness, impurity and every evil way, that we may find it the easier to cultivate in our hearts the beautiful graces of the Spirit.

Only in our **minds** have the old things passed 9 away and all things become new. Actually, this change will be accomplished when we become spirit beings. Meantime, if we shall be counted worthy of a place in the First Resurrection, it is required of us that we shall demonstrate our willingness of mind, our earnest desire, to be all that the Lord would have us be. In no way can this be better demonstrated to the Lord or prove more helpful to ourselves than in keeping a strict surveillance of our hearts and of our thoughts.—Z. '11: 381, 382.

Jesus and the Children

Mark 9:30-41; 10:13-16.

"Gird yourselves with humility, to serve one another: for God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble."—1 Peter 5:5, R.V.

THE Master knew that the time of His death drew near. He wished to break the information gently to His loving disciples. Therefore He passed hastily through Galilee, en route for Capernaum, as stated in our lesson, rather seeking to avoid the curious. He desired this opportunity for breaking to His disciples the news of His soon-to-be-completed sacrifice. While He had previously declared that none could touch him because His hour had not yet come, now He declared that He would be delivered up into the hands of men, and that they would kill Him, and on the third day He would rise from the dead.

2 But the disciples understood not and feared to ask explanation. They were only natural men; for none were begotten of the Holy Spirit until Pentecost. (John 7:39; Acts 1:8.) As Jews, they had the thought of the Messianic Kingdom uppermost in their minds. Jesus had authorized them to preach the Kingdom at hand, and had promised them a share in the Kingdom. Until now they were not ready for the further information that the Jewish nation would fail to accept Him, and that thus the Kingdom blessings would be put off for centuries.

3 The Apostles had heard Jesus utter so many "dark sayings" and parables that they were bewildered, and wondered what interpretation to give to these words about His death and resurrection. But their minds naturally drifted to the great hopes that were before them—that Jesus would soon be the King, and they would then be in honored positions as His associates in the Kingdom. They even went beyond this, and disputed amongst themselves as respects the honorable positions they would occupy and as to which would be greatest—the Lord's prime minister. So little did they understand the great trials and disappointments which were only a few days in advance!

4 Jesus gathered them about Him and inquired respecting their dispute; but they were ashamed to tell the topic. Then He gave them advice to the effect that the selfishly ambitious who would be seeking honor rather than service would be disappointed. In His Kingdom self-seekers would have the lowest place. As illustrating the matter He took a child and set him in their midst and said, "Whosoever shall receive one such little child in My name receiveth Me, and whosoever receiveth Me receiveth [not Me alone, but] Him that sent Me."

5 By this the Master sought to show His disciples that it was not their own greatness that was to be considered, but God's favor. The humblest one amongst them, if favored by God, would have a high position. They were to have the spirit of sympathy and of appreciation of the Divine work of grace in each other. They were to receive each other as representatives of Jesus; and more, as representatives of the Father. If they entertained such views of one another, surely they would be kind and gentle toward all, and would seek to be helpful—"in honor preferring one another."—Romans 12:10.

Blessing the Children

The second part of our lesson recounts that the great Teacher was a lover of children even though, so far as the record shows, He did not generally give His time to them. When fond parents brought their children, desiring Him to bless them, the disciples, feeling that the Lord's time was too valuable to be thus used, rebuked them. But Jesus very earnestly directed that the children should be allowed to come. He took them up in His arms and put His hands upon them and blessed them, thus exhibiting His own sympathetic love and humility of heart. He could preach to one Samaritan woman by the well or take time to fondle children, notwithstanding the weight of the work that was upon Him and the fact that His course was nearly finished. 6

But as the subject of the Kingdom was uppermost in His teachings and in the minds of His disciples, He took another opportunity of teaching them a lesson. They had, perhaps, been feeling too sure that they would be members of the Kingdom class. They had not yet learned what crucial tests would be applied to those who would be counted worthy to sit with the Redeemer in His Messianic Throne of glory and to participate with Him in blessing all the families of the earth. He therefore said: "Permit the little children to come unto Me, for of such is the Kingdom of God." 7

We are not by these words to understand that the Master meant that His disciples, those whom He usually addressed in His discourses, would not be in the Kingdom, and that all in the Kingdom would be little children. Quite to the contrary. Little children will not be in the Kingdom at all. Only developed, tried, perfected characters will constitute the overcomers who will sit with the Master in His Throne.

The thought that the Lord would impress here, as elsewhere expressed, is that even His twelve Apostles would not be in the Kingdom unless they became childlike, teachable, plastic, trustful. The proper child, unspoiled by its elders, is disposed to be very trustful; and, until deceived, it is disposed to believe every word of the parent and to trust implicitly to the parent's wisdom and power. All who become children of God must reach this condition of heart as respects the Heavenly Father. Whoever does not attain this condition will not be fit for the Kingdom.

Impressing His subject still further, the Great Teacher said: "Whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God as a little child, shall not enter therein." This expression clarified the subject. The followers of Jesus are not to be little children, but must be childlike, because only the childlike followers will ever participate in the Kingdom. The receiving of the Kingdom mentioned evidently means 10 the receiving of the Message of the Kingdom; for manifestly none can receive a kingdom until the kingdom has come or has been offered.

Thus with the Jewish nation: The offer of the Kingdom came at the close of Jesus' ministry, when, after the manner of the kings of Israel, He rode into Jerusalem upon the ass, thus offering Himself as their King. The worldly scribes and Pharisees were too wise to receive Jesus, and plotted for His death. His disciples were as trustful as little children, and fully believed the Message of God's Word that there would be a Kingdom and the further Message that Jesus was the appointed King, who in due time would take His power and reign for the blessing of the world.

This was illustrated when Jesus sat upon the ass. The multitude, crying "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord!" treated Him as the King. The disciples, fully acquiescing, as little children, doubted nothing. On the other hand, the "wise" scribes and Pharisees called out that the multitude must be stopped from thus shouting. They should be told that Jesus was not the Messiah, that they were deceived. But Jesus merely answered that what they witnessed had been foretold by the Prophet Zechariah (9:9)—that there must be a shout. And the Lord declared that if the people did not shout the stones would be obliged to cry out, in order that the prophecy might be fulfilled. —Luke 19:40.

It seems remarkable that, after all the Bible has said respecting Messiah's Kingdom and the work which it is to accomplish in the blessing of Israel and all the families of the earth, so few seem to believe the Message. The majority today, like the scribes and Pharisees of old, are too "wise" to believe in the possibility of the establishment of Messiah's Kingdom. They realize the need of the Kingdom, but they have certain theories of their own which blind them to the Truth. . . .

Our Golden Text assures us that the Church, now being called to sit with Christ in His Throne in due time, must be girded with humility, as servants one of another; for God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble. Therefore only the humble will receive the great gift of the Kingdom honors and opportunities.—Z. '13:363, 364.

"He Careth for You"

1 Kings 17:1-16.

DURING the period of Ahab's prosperity in his wicked course, leading the people of Israel further than ever into idolatry, the Lord sent him and the whole nation a rebuke and chastisement through Elijah the prophet. In order to thoroughly appreciate the Lord's interposition in the affairs of Israel—the sending of famines, etc.—we must remember that he entered into a special covenant with that nation at Mount Sinai when the Law was given them. According to that covenant, the obedience of the nation to the Lord guaranteed it earthly blessing and prosperity, while disobedience, idolatry, etc., insured it tribulation, chastisement, famine, etc. It is necessary to remember this special relationship of Israel to God, that we be not confused in supposing that every famine in the world's history, every pestilence, every war, etc., has been similarly of special divine imposition in chastisement, etc. God's relationship to that one nation was peculiar, as expressed by the Prophet, "You only have I known [recognized] of all the families of the earth."—Amos 3:2.

The Drouth Prophesied

Elijah went to the capital city, Samaria, and presented himself in the presence of the king as the Lord's mouthpiece, as expressed in the first verse of our lesson by the words, "before whom I stand"—or whose representative I am. The announcement was respecting the dearth of rain, which, to people in that part of the world, meant famine and death; and this dearth of rain and dew was to last for years. The Lord might have withheld rain without using Elijah as his mouthpiece in the matter, but in that event the lesson would have been measurably lost upon the people. By sending the message in advance of the drouth it would be evident to Ahab and to all who should ever come to know of the circumstances that the drouth was a judgment from the Lord, a punishment for sin. The drouth and the consequent famine lasted three and a half years, and it is difficult to imagine how the people could have subsisted for that length of time had no rain whatever fallen, as would seem to be implied by the language of the Prophet. However, it is remarked that of the four Hebrew words used to represent rain, the one here used is the one which is generally understood and translated to mean the early rain, the principal rain, which usually came in the fall of the year.

After the delivery of his message the Lord directed his Prophet to go eastward beyond the river Jordan to a brook which cannot now be accurately located. The Prophet was to hide himself—to keep his identity secret, his whereabouts unknown to the king. This was probably for two reasons: (1) To preserve him from special persecution as the one who had brought the trouble, and the one who, if he would, could remove it. (2) The inability of the king to find the Prophet, whose word alone could, under the Lord's arrangement, revoke the drouth and famine, should cause the king and the people to appreciate the matter as a judgment of the Lord and lead them to look to the Lord for relief from their chastisements.

Ravens God's Messengers

It is estimated that the Prophet spent about a year in the vicinity of the brook Cherith—miraculously supplied with food by ravens and with water from the brook until it dried up. There have been

6 various speculations respecting these "ravens"—whether or not the word raven is here used in a figurative sense to represent various assistances, or whether ravens literally fed the Prophet. It is a matter of fact that the highland country to the east of the Jordan is just such a place as the ravens usually inhabit, and that bird is noted as "the most highly developed of all birds, quick-sighted, sagacious and bold." . . .

7 The child of God will have no difficulty whatever in accepting the fact that our heavenly Father was quite able to use the ravens in supplying the needs of his servant. The lesson to the Lord's people in this connection is expressed in the inspired words, "He careth for you" (1 Pet. 5:7), "My God shall supply all your needs." (Phil. 4:19.) The Lord did not supply Elijah with luxuries, but with the absolute necessities. And so it may be at times with us. We may not have the superfluity and delicacies of the king upon our tables nor in our ward-robes, yet it may be well with us because of our relationship with the Lord, our realization that we are his servants and that he careth for us, and is making trials and disciplines of present experiences to work out for us much advantage every way for the future, as well as rest and peace of heart for the present. Let us remember in this connection the words of the Apostle, "Be content with such things as ye have." (Heb. 13:5.) We would not be understood as meaning that we should not note and avail ourselves of any providential doors that the Lord might open before us for a betterment of our condition, but we would impress the thought that contentment with godliness is great gain, and should always be the portion of the Lord's faithful people, as expressed by the poet, "Content whatever lot I see, since 'tis my God that leadeth me."

Heathen Faith Honored

8 Those who neglect thus to look for the Lord's leading and guidance in their affairs are not only missing a blessing to their hearts in the present time, but are failing to be prepared for the glorious things which the Lord has in reservation for his people in the future. The Lord could have continued the miracle wrought in Elijah's case—supplying the water and the food indefinitely had he so chosen—but in due time he permitted the drying up of the brook and sent his servant elsewhere, and the facts show and the words of our Lord Jesus prove that he was specially sent to the other location in the interest of a poor widow. This widow lived at Zarephath near the sea coast, in about the same locality as the Syrophoenician woman whose daughter our Lord healed. Zarephath was outside the kingdom of Israel, and the widow was evidently not an Israelite, but a godly Gentile—like the Syrophoenician woman, of greater faith than many in Israel. Our Lord's miracle, giving some of the crumbs of divine favor to the "dogs," Gentiles, indicates to us the Lord's appreciation of well-intentioned people outside of Israel, although under his covenant with that nation they were considered strangers, aliens, foreigners from God and not heirs of the promise made to the children of Abraham.

9 The widow to whom Elijah was sent had a little son, and the famine, which was heavy upon the land of Israel, naturally extended also to the land of Sidon, which lay along the Mediterranean seacoast. Doubtless the wealthy, both in the land of Israel and in the land of Sidon, could procure the necessities of life, and the burden doubtless fell specially upon the very poor. The widow in question was gathering some firewood when the Prophet met her and requested a little water. The streams of that vicinity from the mountains of Lebanon had evidently not completely dried up, as had the brook from which the Prophet had just come, and the widow was able to supply him refreshment: but when he asked her for bread she was compelled to tell him the truth, that she was nearly as poor as himself—that the earthen pot in which she kept her store of meal (called in our text a barrel) was nearly empty, and that she was just preparing to cook the last of it, expecting thereafter that herself and her child would die of famine. The Prophet suggested that she first of all make a little cake for him, and that afterward he would guarantee as a Prophet of the Lord that her meal should not decrease nor her bottle of oil diminish until the Lord would send rain upon the earth, which would break the famine. It required great faith on the woman's part to accept this statement and give to the Prophet of her little store of food. No wonder the Lord was pleased to bless such an one—pleased to send his servant to her, though in going to her he passed by many widows in Israel, as our Lord indicates. No wonder her faith is mentioned as a memorial of her.

The Lord Loveth the Cheerful Giver

There are several lessons in this connection for the Lord's people: First, the spirit of generosity—readiness to give to those who are worthy and are in need. We are not attempting to hold up the case as one having a parallel every day. We are to remember, on the contrary, the famine stress of the times, for, had it been otherwise, quite probably the woman would have been justified in asking the Prophet why he did not labor for his own food instead of asking to share her bite. It was, however, a time of distress, of general lack of employment, etc., and the woman showed forth a noble sentiment of heart. Neither would we advise that the word of every stranger be taken so implicitly as this widow accepted the Prophet's word. Nevertheless, faith in humanity and faith in God and generosity of heart—willingness to divide our little all with those whom we believe to be the Lord's people and in need—will surely today as then bring a divine blessing, and we hold that it is better to err on the generous side than the reverse. Our heavenly Father is generous, giving continually of his substance to us all, and we are exhorted to be like unto our Father in heaven—kind even to the unthankful—generous to those who are not generous to us. Whoever cultivates this spirit cultivates the Godlike quality, and thus is drawn nearer to the Lord and closely into fellowship with him, and is prepared for greater blessings to come. 10

It is estimated that Elijah's stay at the home of the widow, and their mutual participation in her little store of meal and oil, lasted about two to two and a half years. The Lord continually worked a miracle for their sustenance, and he is equally able to work such a miracle today in our interest if in 11 his judgment it were necessary., But such miracles are unnecessary today and under present conditions, and should not be expected. Rather the hearts of the Lord's people should look for divine interposition in their interests as New Creatures in Christ Jesus. How often has the Lord used figurative ravens and wolves to bring to his children needed spiritual nourishment! How often have the trials and difficulties and persecutions of the evil one and his blinded followers been overruled of the Lord for good to those who trust in his name. This thought is expressed by the Psalmist in that beautiful twenty-third psalm, in which he represents the Lord's consecrated ones as his sheep, led by green pastures and still waters: then changing the figure he says: "Thou preparest for me a table in the presence of mine enemies—my cup [of joy, spiritual refreshment]runneth over."

The Prophet's experiences at Zarephath also represents spiritual experiences of the Lord's people today. How often has the Lord provided his people with spiritual refreshments, encouragements, etc., through those who are not his children! As such experiences bring blessings to the Lord's people, they also bring blessings to those who are used to minister them, and thus the same lessons of experience today are continually ours as they were those of the Prophet twenty-five centuries ago. The lesson for us is the Lord's care and the propriety of confidence in him, and the realization that he is able to use any means he may desire in sending us his favors.—Z. '04: 218-220.

"Truth is Stranger than Fiction"

(Continued from Old Corn Gems No. 80.)

FOR A TIME we had a most painful experience: the readers of the **Tower** and the **Herald** were the same; and from the time the former started and the supply of funds from this quarter for the **Herald** ceased, Mr. B. not only drew from the bank the money deposited by me and treated all he had in his possession as his own, but poured upon the Editor of the **Tower** the vilest of personal abuse in order to prevent the **Tower** and the doctrine of the ransom from having due influence upon the readers. This of course caused a division, as such things always do. The personal abuse, being regarded by some as true, had its intended effect of biasing the judgments of many on the subject of the ransom; and many turned from us.

But the Lord continued his favor, which I esteem of more value than the favor of the whole world. It was at this time that Mr. Adams espoused the views of Mr. Barbour and likewise forsook the doctrine of the ransom. And, true to our interpretation of the parable of the wedding garment as given at the time, Mr. Barbour and Mr. Adams, having cast off the wedding garment of Christ's righteousness, went out of the light into the outer darkness of the world on the subjects once so clearly seen—namely, the time and manner of the Lord's presence; and since then they have been expecting Christ in the flesh every Spring or Fall and twisting the prophecies accordingly.

During part of this ordeal, or we might truly call it battle, for the cross of Christ, we had the earnest co-operation of Mr. Paton, who, up to the Summer of 1881, was an appreciated co-laborer and defender of the doctrine of coming blessings through Christ, based upon the **ransom for all** given at Calvary. The book, **The Three Worlds,** having been for some time out of print, it seemed as if either another edition of that, or else a new book covering the same features, should be gotten out. Mr. Paton agreed to get it ready for the press, and Mr. Jones offered to pay all the expenses incident to its printing and binding and to give Mr. Paton as many copies of the book as he could sell, as remuneration for his time spent in preparing the matter, provided I would agree to advertise it liberally and gratuitously in the **Tower**—well knowing that there would be a demand for it if I should recommend it, and that his outlay would be sure to return with profit. (For those books did not sell at such low prices as we charge for **Millennial Dawn.**) I not only agreed to this, but contributed to Mr. Paton's personal expenses in connection with the publishing, as well as paid part of the printer's bill at his solicitation.

In the end, I alone was at any financial loss in connection with the book, called **Day Dawn,** the writer and publisher both being gainers financially, while I did all the introducing by repeated advertisements. We need to give these particulars, because of certain one-sided and only partial statements of facts and misrepresentations which have recently been published and circulated in tract form by Mr. Paton, who is also now an advocate of that "other gospel" of which the cross of Christ is not the center, and which denies that he "**bought us with** his own precious blood." Mr. P. has since published another book, which, though called by the same name as the one we introduced, being on another and a false foundation, I cannot and do not recommend, but which I esteem misleading sophistry, tending to undermine the whole structure of the Christian system, yet retaining a sufficiency of the truths which we once held in common to make it palatable and dangerous to all not rooted and grounded upon the ransom rock.

The false foundation which it presents is the old heathen doctrine of evolution revamped, which not only denies the fall of man, but as a consequence, all **necessity** for a redeemer. It claims, on the contrary, that not by redemption and restitution to a lost estate, but by progressive evolution or development, man has risen and is still to rise from the lower condition in which he was created until, by his own good works, he ultimately reaches the divine nature. It claims that our blessed Lord was himself a degraded and imperfect man, whose work on earth was to crucify a carnal nature, which, it claims, he possessed, and to thus show all men how to crucify their carnal or sinful propensities.

And here we remark that the darkness and degradation which came upon the whole world in its fallen, cast-off condition, and which was only intensified by Papacy's priestcraft during the dark ages, when contrasted with the light of intelligence, which God is now letting in upon the world, have gradually led men to esteem present intelligence as merely a part of a process of evolution. This view, as we have shown, though quite incorrect, is nevertheless the occasion of the predicted great falling away from the faith of the Bible during the harvest period. (Psa. 91:7.) And few Christian people seem to be well enough grounded in the Truth to be able to withstand this trial of the evil day, in which many will fall while only the few will stand. For this cause we use great plainness of speech.

The little history of the way in which Mr. Paton came to turn from us and from the ransom, to oppose that which he once clearly saw and advocated, is important, as it became the occasion of another sifting or testing of the **Watch Tower** readers, by that time a much larger number (because Mr. Paton had been a respected brother and co-worker with us, and because as a traveling representative of the **Tower** and its doctrines, his expenses being met in part by **Tower** subscriptions and renewals, as well as by money from me, he was personally known to a larger number of the readers than was the Editor of the **Tower**). It came about thus:—

In the year 1881, Mr. Barbour, still publishing the **Herald**, and still endeavoring to overthrow the doctrine of the Ransom, finding that on a preaching tour I had used a diagram of the Tabernacle to illustrate how Christ's sacrifice was typified in the sacrifices of typical Israel, wrote an article on the Atonement, in which he undertook to show that the sacrifices of the Day of Atonement typified almost anything else than what they do typify. I could readily see through the fallacy of his presentation, which made of the bullock a type of one thing in one verse and another thing in each other verse in which it was mentioned, and so too with the goat. But I well knew that people in general are not close reasoners, and that, with the cares of life upon them, they are too apt to accept a seeming interpretation, without a critical examination of the words of Scripture and their context.

I thought the matter all over. I examined the chapter (Lev. 16), but while seeing the inconsistency and error of Mr. Barbour's interpretation, I could only confess that I did not understand it and could not give a connected interpretation which would fit all the details so plainly stated, and all of which must have a particular meaning. What could I do? Those reading the **Herald** as well as the **Tower** would probably be misled, if not helped out of the difficulty; and to merely say that the **Herald's** interpretation was inconsistent with itself, and therefore a misinterpretation, would be misunderstood. Many would surely think that I opposed that view from a spirit of rivalry; for there are always people with whom everything resolves itself into personality, rivalry and party spirit, and such cannot understand others who take a higher and nobler view, and who think always and only of the Truth, regardless of persons.—Z. '06:233, 234.

(Continued in Old Corn Gems No. 82.)

Gideon's Brave Three Hundred

Judges 7:1-8, 16-23.

"Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith Jehovah of hosts."—Zechariah 4:6.

TODAY'S Study reminds of the victory of the Spartan Three Hundred over the Persian hosts, except that in this case the battle depended, not upon human bravery, but upon the Lord's blessing. . . . It shows an army of 32,000 with Gideon at the foot of Mount Gilboa, at Harod Spring—a little lake which drains off eastward to the Jordan. On the farther side of the lake were the Midianites, numbering about 135,000. An invading host, they had for some time been pillaging the Israelites unmolestedly; but now they learned that Gideon's army was gathering; and they assembled themselves to crush it.

While Gideon was feeling that his army was far too small for such a battle—one to four—the Lord directed him to the contrary—that the army was too large, and that there would be danger that the victory He purposed should come might not be appreciated as being from the Lord, but be thought to indicate the dexterity of Israel's warriors. Accordingly, by Divine direction, Gideon gave word to his army of 32,000 that as many of them as were fearful and preferred to return home might do so. Many were fearful—22,000. The name of the spring, Harod, signifies coward; and it has been assumed that the name was given it because of the fear manifested by the 22,000 who went home.

Surely the faith of Gideon was tried as his little army melted to 10,000 men! But the Lord said to him, There are yet too many. Cause the host to go down to the spring to drink; and discern between those who drink directly from the pool, kneeling down and putting their mouths into the water and sucking it up, and those who, bending over, lap from their hands as a dog laps with his tongue.

There were Three Hundred of this latter class left by this test; and the Lord declared these to be the proper ones to especially win the victory. The remaining 9,700, however, would later join in the pursuit of the enemy.

The custom of lapping water with the hand is still common with the people of Palestine—shepherds, etc. They became very expert at it. Symbolically, this act would seem to signify alertness and obedience. An ox drinks by putting his mouth into the water and sucking it and, when thirsty, gives his entire attention to the sucking of the water, refusing to pay any attention to the commands of his owner, and even resisting the use of the rod upon his flanks. The dog, on the contrary, while lapping the water with his tongue, is all alert, with his eyes watching in every direction, seeing everything about him, and ready to quit the water at any moment in pursuit of obedience to duty.

If water here, as elsewhere in the Bible, be understood to represent the Truth, these two companies of Gideon's army would represent two classes who love and appreciate the Truth. Both classes drink of the water of Truth, but the one class more for their own satisfaction. The other class, watchful, attentive, drink according to their needs, and do not neglect alertness in the Master's service, keeping eyes and ears open for the guidance of Divine providence at all times. This latter, wiser class are represented by the Three Hundred who were with Gideon, Gideon himself representing Jesus, the Captain of our Salvation.

The Victory at Armageddon

Armies in olden times evidently did not keep so strict a watch as do modern armies. At all events, Gideon and a trusted companion were able to penetrate in the darkness of the night amongst the tents of the Midianites. Listening, they heard one relate his dream of how a barley loaf rolled down a hill and did havoc. Another offered the interpretation that this was Gideon and his small army, which was likely to be their undoing. The incident shows that the Midianites were fearful, apprehensive. Gideon was confident; his faith was strengthened by this little experience which the Lord permitted him to have.

About midnight, shortly after the hour of the changing of the guards amongst the Midianites, was the time appointed for Gideon's attack. The method of warfare was novel. The Three Hundred were divided into three companies, and spread out over a considerable space near the Midianites. In addition to their usual armor, sword, etc., Gideon and his Three Hundred had new weapons. Each in his left hand had a pitcher of earthenware, each pitcher had in it a lamp; and each soldier had in his other hand a ram's horn trumpet. The instructions to the three separated bands were that those who were immediately with Gideon should do as he did; and that the other bands, hearing, should imitate, breaking the front of their pitchers to let the light shine out ahead, shouting aloud, "Jehovah and Gideon," and blowing in the rams' horns.

The Midianites, waking out of sleep, beholding the flashing lights, hearing the clash of the pottery like the sound of armor, hearing the shouting of voices and the blowing of trumpets, imagined themselves being surrounded by a great host; and half-dazed, they fled. They fought each other, mistaking each other for foes. Gideon and his Three Hundred pursued and were soon in the fight, assisted by the remaining 9,700. The victory was a great one. The Lord was recognized to be the Deliverer; and Gideon, His servant, was honored accordingly.

Some Lessons for Today

Referring to Old Testament matters the Apostle declares, "These things were written aforetime for our instruction." (Romans 15:4.) In addition to the lessons learned at that time the Lord, through some of these experiences of the past, gives certain spiritual lessons to Spiritual Israel. Gideon's call resembles the Gospel Call for volunteers on the side of righteousness—of right against wrong, truth against error.

Many in the world hear the Message, have sympathy with it and respond, purposing to become soldiers of Christ; but before they are fully accepted, the voice of Jesus calls to them, saying, Sit down and count the cost; it is better not to put your hand to the plow and become a servant of the Lord than afterward to look back and wish that you had not become one.

The sight of the enemy, the "fear of death" (Hebrews 2:15), causes them to walk not with the Master, because it is too much. When they first responded to the Call, they thought of the glory and honor, but overlooked the fact that these could be obtained only at the cost of hardship and endurance. These cowards who turn back, and never really take the vow of consecration, are perhaps no worse off than if they had never responded. But they will not share in the great victory—the laurels will not be theirs; the crown of life will not be their portion.

Then comes the second test—that of obedience and loyalty. One class of the Lord's people, like the faithful dog, put obedience to the Master's voice first, alert to do His will. Another portion of the Lord's consecrated people heed less the Master's voice, and even the rod; and being less alert to the service of the Lord, they are less used of Him.

Compared to the world, the most alert ones are but as very few. It is those of the Lord's people who are alert that He chooses and grants the greatest opportunities for service. These are the ones most willing to break the earthen vessel—to use their present earthly lives in the service of the Lord—that the light of Truth may shine out, and that the Cause of Truth may have a victory. These zealous ones are most faithful in blowing upon the trumpet, representative of God's Word. These have the blessed opportunity for letting their light shine. Their zeal entitles them to special privileges and opportunities.

The victory of the Lord is attained by the Antitypical Gideon and His little band of faithful followers, "not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord." The Lord's Spirit is represented by the light of the lamp shining from the broken vessel. The broken vessels of Gideon's host represent how the Lord's people present their bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God, in His service—in letting the light shine out—in fighting a good fight against the hosts of sin.

We are doubtless near the time when the great victory, the antitype of Gideon's, will be accomplished, when the hosts of sin, the powers of evil, will fall upon one another for their mutual destruction. The war amongst the nations of Europe was the beginning of this, but not its end. According to the Bible, the climax will be a temporary reign of anarchy, which will fully prepare the world for Messiah's glorious Reign of Righteousness.—Z. '15: 10, 11.

"Love Casteth Out Fear"

"There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear; because fear hath torment."—1 John 4:18.

BETTER expressed could have been the thought of the text by saying, "There is no **dread** in love." We do not dread that which we love. In one sense, however, the more we love, the more we fear. We would not be so careful about pleasing a person whom we do not thus love. This is not the kind of fear, however, that the Apostle wishes us to cast out. On the contrary, it should be much enhanced. Consequently, the word dread would more accurately express the thought of our text.

The Scriptures speak of some who have "no fear of God before their eyes." (Rom. 3:18.) Evidently these are unregenerate. Often, among men, there is a thoughtlessness in respect to God and the future. The Apostle in this text does not intimate that all hearts have fear; but that if any heart has fear, perfect love will cast it out. As the knowledge and love increase, the fear diminishes. We may say that those of the world who have a reverential fear are such as are in a preferable attitude of mind; they are in better condition than the thoughtless. In life, certain conditions which surround us call for reverence; and man's brain is so constituted that reverence will be a part of his mental attitude if he be not depraved. Hence, the Scriptures say that "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." (Prov. 9:10.) The fear of the Lord, the **reverence** of the Lord, will bring a blessing. **This** fear of the Lord rather increases as the child of God comes to know His Maker; but it is a gradual process.

There is a certain kind of fear which comes as the result of imperfect knowledge. We do not credit the Adversary with producing all the evil thoughts of the human mind, yet we believe he has very much to do with the evil influences which surround our race. People may be without fear of God; and we think that even after they have come to the Lord, and are learning to reverence Him and to know something about Him, they may lack the right kind of fear. Then the Adversary's plan will be to plant dread in their minds.

So we find with all heathen peoples. As soon as they have any knowledge of God, the Adversary seems to conjure up slavish fear which crowds out **love**, and produces **dread**. We read that "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not." (2 Cor. 4:4.) We think that this evil influence is accountable for many of the things which seem so remarkable to us. It explains the fact that the heathen have devilish doctrines mingled with dread of God; and that all the worldly who have knowledge of God, both Jews and Christians, have fear also—**dread**. Yet Christians have much greater light upon God's character than have others, and so should have correspondingly less fear than the heathen.

A Certain Kind of Fear Proper

Evidently our text is not intended to signify that a Christian should have no sense of fear. This fact is shown by the experience of the first Christian, our Lord Himself, in the Garden of Gethsemane. He there feared, as the Apostle tells us in speaking of this occasion, and He was heard in that He feared. He offered up strong cryings and tears to Him who was able to save Him out of death. (Heb. 5:7.) If the Master feared, so should His followers. The Apostle says, "Let us, therefore, fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." (Heb. 4:1.) How shall we harmonize these fears with our text. The text is, evidently, not intended to contradict the great lessons otherwise taught. Our Lord Jesus appealed to the Father who, He knew, loved Him; but He knew also, that the Father was absolutely perfect, righteous, just; and He feared lest He might have come short in fulfilling some of the requirements.

So with us. Let us know that "God is love" (1 John 4:8), but let us fear **respecting ourselves**, and have such a carefulness, such a desire to please God that we should feel fearful lest in any degree we should come short. Ignorance begets fear; but love for God will enable us to cast out that fear, and will also enable us to come to God with great confidence. So let us "Draw nigh unto God" (James 4:8) with full confidence that He will bless us. This thought is the very opposite to that in the heathen mind. Their conception of a **god** is that of a **demon**. The Christian, on the other hand, who is walking in the footsteps of the Master, learns to love his God and to wish to do the Father's will only. Nothing is acceptable in the nature of a sacrifice that is not prompted by that love. "The Father seeketh such to worship Him as worship Him in spirit and in truth."—John 4:23, 24; Z. '11:188.

◇

The voice **behind** brings comfort, peace and rest in the midst of all life's cares and trials, if we walk in obedience to all its principles and precepts. "And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them and mercy, and upon the Israel of God!" —Z. 11:360.

Let us praise God for the blessings and mercies already ours, and go on faithfully rejoicing in the light of our lamps and in the anticipation of the glorious nuptial feast and the later glorious work, with the Bridegroom, of blessing all the families of the earth.—Z. '06:315.

KERNELS KERNELS KERNELS

Question.—In Isa. 66:23, the Sabbath is mentioned in connection with the new heavens and new earth—which to us means that it will be a perpetual institution—throughout eternity.

Answer.—It is possible that in the beginning of the Millennial Age the Lord's dealing with the world of mankind, then in process of restitution and trial, will resemble his dealing with the house of servants—Israel. He may restore laws respecting the Sabbath and various festivals, and even sacrifices, to teach the world by these as object lessons. Some Scriptures seem so to hint. (Jer. 33:18; Ezek. 46:19-24; 47:12; 48:10, 11.) . . . —Z. '94:360.

◆

We are not to understand that the conduct of one could send another into the Second Death, without his co-operation. No one could intervene to separate us from God. As the Apostle asks, "Who shall separate us from Christ?" (Rom. 8:35.) But whatever influence we have may be used for either the assistance or the injury of another. It is possible for us, not only to so live as to be helpful to others, but to so act as to injure others. Nothing in the example of another could give us eternal life; but the doings and example of one might be an assistance to another; and if we can be of assistance to each other, we can also be injurious.—Z. '11:170.

◆

Our attainment of the prize of our "heavenly calling," based upon certain conditions which we are striving to meet, is not dependent upon our own perfection or anything that we could do. The basis of it is the knowledge of our own imperfection and our acceptance by the Father because of the merit of our great Advocate imputed to us.

It was God who provided for the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; and it is God who has drawn us to himself and who gives us grace to follow in the footsteps of Jesus in the way of self-sacrifice. While with fear and trembling or with **great carefulness**, we work out our salvation, we realize the promised grace in every time of need; and we may be confident that our best efforts toward righteousness are acceptable to God only when presented through the merit of the righteousness of Christ, imputed to us by faith.—Heb. 4:16; Eph. 2:8; Z. '11:108.

◆

Each and every one of the New Creatures, sons of God, accepted through the merit of Jesus, is held responsible for his own weaknesses; but Divine Power has provided for the cancellation of these freely for Christ's sake, upon their acknowledgment and request for forgiveness. But the forgiving of these trespasses of God's children is made dependent upon their having a spirit of forgiveness toward the brethren, for "if ye do not from the heart forgive one another's trespasses, neither will your Heavenly Father forgive you." "With what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure" of benevolence ye mete out to others, the same shall be meted out to you. How wonderful are the Divine arrangements! How blessed, how profitable to us, how helpful to us in our preparation for the Kingdom!—Z. '12:359.

◆

Let us not be found fighting against God. He is mighty and will prevail, and all of His purposes, He assures us, will surely be accomplished.—Z. '11:221.

◆

The miraculous supply of manna to Natural Israel in the wilderness was not in our estimation more wonderful nor a better foundation for faith in the divine providences than is the present supply of spiritual manna to the Spiritual Israelites.—Z. '07:248.

◆

The little army of faithful soldiers, all told, is but a handful, a Little Flock. Though in numbers they are so insignificant that the hosts of the opposers of the Truth fear little from their efforts, the final victory shall be theirs; and God's power shall be glorified and manifested in them proportionately more.

Like Gideon's three hundred picked men who feared not to face the hosts of Midian because the Lord was with them, these have but to go forth likewise, strong in faith, sounding their trumpets of Truth and breaking their earthen vessels (sacrificing their human nature) that the blessed light of God's Spirit may shine out; and at the appointed hour the hosts of the enemy shall take the alarm and flee. Systems of error, new and old, shall be turned to destruction and, as in the case of the Midianites, each shall turn upon the other to accomplish the work of their destruction.

To have the privilege of fighting this good fight of faith and of being the Lord's chosen ones for the great work now to be done, God's children like Gideon's army, must first be **proved**—tested. At first there was a host of thirty-two thousand with Gideon; and when all that were fearful were told to return to their homes, only ten thousand remained; and when God further tested these, only three hundred remained. A little, insignificant company, truly, they must have appeared, not only to the Midianites, but also to themselves. Yet God's power was made the more manifest by their smallness and weakness.—Judges 7:3, 7, 22; Z. '12:306.

NOTICE

The General Convention held recently in Victoria requested by unanimous vote that another book be published on the Temple of Ezekiel's vision. This book, called "Temple Notes," is now being compiled; the cost will be $2.00 per copy bound in leatherette, cut flush, and $2.50 bound in full leather, embossed in gilt. It will be interleaved throughout with plain paper. Orders for this book should be sent as soon as possible to Standfast Bible Students, Box 7, Victoria, B.C.

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Old Corn Gems

NUMBER EIGHTY-TWO

"And they did eat of the OLD CORN of the land on the morrow after the Passover . . . and the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the OLD CORN of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year." Joshua 5:11-12.

A SAFE RULE

"WHERE A BROTHER GIVES AN INTERPRETATION OF A SCRIPTURE WHICH DIFFERS FROM THAT GIVEN BY BROTHER RUSSELL, AND BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION SEEMS REASONABLE AND IN HARMONY WITH THE PLAN OF GOD, THEN WE BELIEVE IT A SAFE RULE TO FOLLOW BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION, FOR THE REASON THAT HE IS THE SERVANT OF THE CHURCH, SO CONSTITUTED BY THE LORD FOR THE LAODICEAN PERIOD; AND THEREFORE WE SHOULD EXPECT THE LORD TO TEACH US THROUGH HIM. WHERE THERE ARISES A DOUBT IN THE MIND AS TO WHICH INTERPRETATION IS CORRECT, THEN IT IS ALWAYS SAFER TO RESOLVE THAT DOUBT IN FAVOR OF BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION. WE BELIEVE SUCH TO BE IN HARMONY WITH THE LORD'S WILL." Z. '18:51.

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How We Outwork Our Great Salvation

"Beloved, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure."—Philippians 2:12, 13.

IN THIS chapter from which our text is taken, the Apostle Paul pays a beautiful tribute to the Church at Philippi. He refers in tender and loving terms to their obedience always to his instruction and counsel, not only when he was present with them, but likewise in his absence. He urges them to continued faithfulness and earnestness in this good way. He desires that they make still further progress in the Master's likeness, working out in themselves through humility and obedience the character-development necessary, with fear and trembling, doing their own part in the attainment of the salvation to which they had been called in Christ.

This exhortation of St. Paul is designed likewise for the sanctified in Christ Jesus of today. He reminds us, as he did the Philippian Church, that we are to **work out** our salvation. Elsewhere the Scriptures inform us that our salvation is by grace—that "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but by **His mercy** He saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit." (Titus 3:5.) These Scriptures are not contradictory. Our salvation is "not of ourselves, lest any man should boast." The Father has appointed the Lord Jesus to be our Savior; and it is through Him that our salvation is to be *accomplished*. . . .

We cannot work out our own justification; but being justified by the blood of Christ and being called with the Heavenly Calling, we can do our share in this great work of our own preparation for our future station and glory. We do this by giving heed to the instructions of our Lord, by following the example which He has set us. We can never attain perfection in the flesh; but from the beginning our heart, our intention, must be wholly loyal, and day by day this heart intention must become more and more crystallized, fixed, in the way of righteousness. We must continue the work of bringing our body into subjection, and enlisting in the service of the Lord.

How We Become Sons of God

It is encouraging for us to know that this warfare is not one which we must wage alone. All the powers of Heaven are enlisted on our behalf. Our God has led us thus far in the willing and the doing of His good pleasure, and He will continue thus to lead and help us and work in us by His Word of Truth, if we continue to give heed to His counsel. The Gospel is the "power of God unto salvation unto every one" who accepts it; and no greater stimulus can be found than the exceeding great and precious promises given unto us, that by these we might become "partakers of the Divine nature."

Our salvation is a salvation from death to life, from sin to righteousness. Moreover, it is a transformation from human nature to divine—our "so great salvation!" The initiatory step to our salvation was the work accomplished by our Lord Jesus at Calvary. "He died for our sins." This dying for our sins was first necessary; for there was no one on earth who could pay the penalty of Adam's sin. The Law of God required "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a man's life for a man's life." There was no man perfect; hence God arranged that His Only Begotten Son should meet this death penalty upon man. The Father could have arranged it otherwise, but He did not; therefore we know that this was the best way.

The **death** of Christ, however, was not all that was necessary. "He **rose** again for our justification." His death was for the cancelation of our sins; but it could not effect our justification while He was still in the bonds of death—not until He had risen—and more, not until He had ascended up on High—and more, not until He had presented His merit on our behalf—on behalf of the Church. Still more than this, our justification is not accomplished until, in each individual case, the necessary steps of faith and full consecration have been taken, as a result of which the merit of our Redeemer is imputed. . . .

The Marvelous Grace of God!

This is a wonderful work, a marvelous transformation! Selected from a race of bondslaves of sin, beings of a fleshly nature, depraved, death-stricken, sin-cursed, we are lifted out of the miry clay; we are washed, cleansed, from our pollution, our soiled rags of unrighteousness, and a new nature has been begun in us. Then our earthward tendencies are gradually bent Heavenward. We are transformed day by day, rising **up, up,** until, our resurrection completed, the work of transformation fully accomplished, we are exalted to heights unimaginable—passing the nature and rank of angels, of cherubim, of seraphim, and every name that is named, and seated upon Messiah's Throne, beside the Infinite Son of God, partakers of His glorious nature—the nature of Jehovah Himself—the Divine nature!

Can mortal man conceive so marvelous a glory? The very thought of such a Calling should cause us to bow our hearts in the dust before our God, realizing our great unworthiness of such stupendous grace—of bliss so transcendent! What can we render unto the Lord that can fittingly demonstrate our gratitude, our thankfulness, for so unspeakable a favor? Surely, the most faithful service we can give is but a very feeble return to Him who has so loved us, so blessed us, so honored us!

We are joint-heirs with the Lord of Glory to this wonderful inheritance, if only we are faithful unto death and keep our garments white. To us "old things have passed away, and all things have become new." As old creatures we had no standing with God; we were feeding on the beggarly elements of the world. We were dead in trespasses and in sins. It is only as New Creatures that we have any standing, that we can please God, that we can work for Him. It is this New Creature that the Apostle is addressing in our text.

Our Great Responsibility

As we have made a consecration of ourselves to God, our sins are all under the blood, and the new life has begun in us. We are under a solemn contract to see that the work of transformation steadily progresses. When the Father accepted our offering and our vows to Him, and granted us His Holy Spirit, He did not give us the full consummation of our hopes, but merely an "earnest of our inheritance." Our agreement was to be dead to the world, dead to earthly things, and alive toward God. It is therefore for each of us to demonstrate in our words, in our actions, in our thoughts, that everything in this contract is bona fide on our part—that we meant every word of it. When we become children of God, our one ambition should be to prove our loyalty to God, our loyalty to our Covenant of Sacrifice. Was it not so with our Lord Jesus?

Our Lord came into the world to be our Redeemer. But He was not the Redeemer when He was born, nor when He was thirty years of age, until He made His consecration. He was called the Savior from His birth, only in a prospective sense. He became our Redeemer in the real, the official, sense when He was baptized of John in Jordan, and the Holy Spirit came upon Him in begetting power. Then it remained for Him during the three and a half years of His active service to work out that consecration. Every act of life during that crucial period was the fulfilling of His Covenant of Sacrifice. He had covenanted to sacrifice His human nature with all its conditions and possibilities, in order that He might carry out the Father's purpose. For this cause He came into the world, and He faithfully fulfilled His Covenant. His glorious reward was the Divine nature and the authority to execute all the Father's great Program.

Our Covenant Identical With Christ's

And so it is to be with us, His followers. We come in under the same arrangement, our weaknesses and imperfections being covered by our Redeemer's robe of righteousness, which constitutes our "wedding garment." Thus we stand before the Father complete in the Beloved. And His Word to us is, "My grace is sufficient for thee; for My strength is made perfect in weakness." (2 Corinthians 12:9.) All the children of God who are true to their covenant are working out their salvation from day to day. It is a work of sacrifice, a daily work of crucifixion of the flesh. From the beginning of our consecrated life we are reckoned as being fully "crucified with Christ"; but the actual crucifixion is a slow, painful, lingering process, and ends only with the completion of our sacrifice in death.

"Gather my saints together unto Me, those who have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice," is the command of Jehovah. (Psalm 50:5.) To what extent are we performing this work of sacrifice in ourselves? . . . Are we faithful to the extent of our ability and opportunity? Are we sure that we are careful to note the opportunities, great or small, that are within our reach? If we do not see our opportunities, the Lord will use another to do the work that might have been ours; and we shall lose the blessing and the reward of the service that we might have rendered. How careful, then, we should be!

"Pay That Which Thou Hast Vowed"

Au 5 41

But this is not a matter in which we are to judge one another. It is not for me to say to you that you are not sufficiently earnest in your sacrificing. Neither can you properly say to me that I am not faithfully fulfilling my sacrifice. To his own Master each one stands or falls. It is for the Lord and ourselves to settle this important matter in our individual cases. And we may not fully judge even ourselves. We are to strive to do our best, and then leave the results for the Lord's determining. The Father will apportion to each faithful member of our Lord's Body his own place in the glorious Temple.

The brethren may give a word of suggestion to each other along these lines, but that is all. The Lord alone is to decide whether or not we are each living up to the terms of our covenant. He expects faithfulness in each one who has taken His Covenant upon him. It were far better that we never covenant to sacrifice our earthly life and its interests than that we take this vow upon us and then fail to pay that which we have vowed. (Ecclesiastes 5:4-6.) This is a most solemn matter, and the Lord will certainly require of us the fulfilment of our vows. If death is not voluntary, He will destroy our flesh. If we resist this, it will mean the hopeless death of our being.

Our Faithful, Unchangeable God

"It is God who worketh in you," declares the Apostle Paul. We did not begin this work ourselves. It would never have occurred to us, uninvited, to endeavor to obtain a share in the glory, honor and immortality of the Lord Jesus. It would have been the height of presumption for us so to do without an express invitation. It is God who planned the whole matter. He has been working in us by His promises, by His providences in our daily experiences, and by all the instructions, warnings and counsels of His Word, and we rejoice in this. There is no changeableness with God; and when once He made this proposition, He meant it to the full. It would never mean anything else. He never makes an arrangement which He would wish to abrogate or amend.

We are assured by the Apostle Paul that "He who has begun the good work in us will complete it, unto the Day of Jesus Christ." The only condition is our own faithfulness. God will never fail. "We are His workmanship." He is really doing the work. We are submitting ourselves that God may work in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure. He is the great Master Workman. Thus the work of grace goes on in our hearts and lives, making us ready for the exalted position to which we are called. And it is only if we are negligent of these great privileges granted to us that God will take them from us and give them to others.

Those who are constructing a fine building need special power to accomplish the work—to hoist the great steel frames, the blocks of stone, the brick, etc. Now God purposes to furnish the power by which we may accomplish the work on our character-building, this wonderful structure we are setting up. But the Lord will not accomplish this great work in us unless we diligently co-operate with Him. He gave us the calling, the inspiration, and furnishes all the necessary assistance day by day; so we are to persevere in the building of this character which is essential and which He purposes shall be in all those whom He will make joint-heirs with His Son.

"Do All Things Without Murmurings"

In following in the footsteps of our Lord Jesus, we are not to **murmur** by the way, finding fault with its difficulties and its narrowness; nor are we to dispute how or where we are to be led, nor to seek to have any other way than that which Divine providence marks out for us, realizing and trusting that the Lord knows exactly what experiences are necessary to our development in the character-likeness of Christ. We should realize also that if obedience were possible while our mouths are full of complaints and dissatisfaction with the Lord and with our lot, which He has permitted, it would indicate that we are out of sympathy with the spirit of His arrangement.

Such an obedience, if it were possible—and it is not— would not meet the Divine approval nor gain us the prize. Hence, as the Apostle exhorts, we should "do all things without murmurings and disputings, that we may be the sons of God without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom we shine as lights in the world, holding forth the Word of Life."

How We Are to Fear and Tremble

In the expression of our text—"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling"—we are not to understand that the Lord wishes His children literally to tremble with fear before Him. We should exercise the same judgment in interpreting the words and expressions of Scripture that we would in reading any other book, or in understanding the words of our friends. One called to a position of great responsibility will sometimes say afterwards, "I accepted that position with fear and trembling." He would not mean that he actually quaked with fear; but this is an expression used to indicate that one feels the need of great carefulness—that he realizes his great responsibility and his liability to fail to meet all the requirements without the most earnest attention. It means that one realizes that the matter is not one to be taken up lightly, as if it were a mere bagatelle, but that failure in it would bring serious consequences.

Just so when we read this Scripture, we are not to think that we should tremble with fear before our God; but we believe the Apostle's thought to be that in this great work that we have undertaken—of walking in the footsteps of Jesus that we may attain the prize of our High Calling—**so much** depends upon our faithfulness, our diligence. We have not undertaken a light thing. It is a very heavy responsibility. Our eternal interests are in the balance—the issue of life or death. Those who win the prize will be heirs of God to the highest honors and glories which have ever been offered—to a glory and honor beyond human power to imagine! We believe that no such offer will ever again be made.

The Son of God holds the position next to Jehovah, and can never have but one Bride. Surely, then, there is need that we work out our salvation with fear and trembling—with great carefulness, with great earnestness, in respect to everything in connection with it! We should be keenly appreciative of the fact that it is the most wonderful thing in all the Universe of God! . . . It is well that we have our "pure minds stirred up by way of remembrance," that we may keep our eyes upon the Heavenly City and the prize set before us. The wearisome march will, we believe, soon be ended. At most it is only a **little while**. And so, with steadfast hearts, let us run with patience and perseverance to the end of our course.

"Joyful through hope, thy motto still must be—
The Dawn is here!
What glories does that Dawn unfold to thee!
Be of good cheer!
Gird up thy loins; bind sandals on thy feet!
The way was dark and long; the end is sweet."

—Z. '16: 54-57.

Our Personal Responsibility to God

"See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men."—1 Thessalonians 5:15.

THIS text is a part of the counsel of the Apostle Paul to the Church at Thessalonica, in connection with his message on the subject of the Second Coming of our Lord. He reminds them how carefully and faithfully they should live, who had such hopes of glory, such hopes of being gathered to Christ at His appearing and Kingdom. He exhorts them that they "warn the unruly," that they "comfort the feeble-minded" [faint-hearted], that they "support the weak" [those not strong in the faith, comparatively undeveloped]. Then in the words of our text, he urges that "none render evil for evil unto any."

We do not understand the Apostle to mean that no one in the Church should be permitted to render evil for evil. It would not be in the power nor in the jurisdiction of any one to see that none others do evil. The only ones who have such power or authority would be God Himself and His great Representative, Christ Jesus. In fact, if we undertake to see that no man renders evil for evil, we shall be busybodying in every man's matters; we shall cultivate the habit of evil-surmising, and shall have no time for our own business. The Apostle means, Let each one see to it that he does not return evil for evil. This principle is to govern each; each is to exercise care in his own case.

The thought seems to be that we should be critical of our own motives, of the principles underlying our own conduct. We should reason, "I am about to do so and so. Is this course right?" We should judge our actions in advance. We should not go blundering along, failing to take ourselves in hand, and then say, after the thing is done, "Well, I intend to make amends." Of course we should make amends if we have done wrong. But we should get into the habit of so controlling our mind that it would preclude our doing what we should not do.

While in the flesh, of course we shall never attain perfection in action or words, but we should earnestly endeavor to do our best to attain this. We shall not do our best unless we set ourselves very diligently about it, and determine that we will by the help of the Lord attain as full control of our flesh as is possible. If we make up our minds that we will conquer, much can be accomplished.

All the Saints Strong Characters

The Saviour so loved to do right that He laid down His life for righteousness' sake. Thus it is to be with all who are under His banner, fighting a good fight. But there is a natural tendency to retaliation, especially in persons who have the disposition of conquerors—the very class that God is now seeking. These are the ones who have the qualities of an overcomer. They have a strong individuality; they have a will. They are not supine; they are not merely placid. Those to whom Truth appeals are strong characters; and people of naturally strong character are inclined to carry out the Law of Moses—"an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth"—in the cases of those who have done wrong.

But the Lord's injunction to the Church is to the contrary, for this is the way of the sinful world. God has not yet forced the world into obedience to righteousness; in the Millennial Age He will do this. The special people who have followed Jesus from the world into consecration to God are pledged to do the will of God, to support the right. Being strong characters, they wish to correct that which is wrong. That is a natural impulse and a good one. But we must remember that it is not the time now for us to judge and discipline the world. The Scriptures say, "Judge nothing before the time." We are therefore to await God's time. If the matter is a legal one, and we are personally wronged by process of law, we are to yield to it in the right spirit, even though it be unjust. Let us wait for the Lord's time and way to set things straight.

The Christian Not a General Policeman

If you receive a double injury, there would be a double reason why you would wish to correct it. The inclination to try to do so would rise, but there should be nothing like retaliation. We are not to return evil for evil. We are under responsibility to do evil to none. The expression, "See that none render evil for evil," has been understood by some to signify that the Christian should be a kind of general policeman, to see that his brethren, his neighbors, and everybody else, do no one harm. This is a mistaken idea. There seems to be a certain exception, however, in the case of the head of a family. As the head of the house, one would be responsible to the civil law, as well as to the Divine Law, for the conduct of his household.

Some have supposed that this injunction of the Apostle means: Let the Elders of each congregation see that the members of the congregation do no wrong. This likewise is not the right thought. This Scripture does not give an Elder any more right to **see** that none render evil in return for evil than it does any one else. The passage seems to mean this: Let each of you see that you do not **yourself** render evil for evil.

There might be some ways in which it would be proper for any member of a family to render help to another member who was being wronged. If, for instance, one saw another doing injustice to a third, he might remonstrate. He might say, Brother (or Sister), do you not think so and so about this matter? And so with the Church. But the Elders are charged more especially with looking after the interests of the Church. If they should see some one in the Ecclesia not living up to the Scriptural standard, it would be quite proper to make a suggestion to that one about the matter. But we must not be busybodies in other people's affairs.

We are to build one another up; for thus the Bride makes herself ready. These matters should be approached only after prayer and in the very wisest way possible, lest we do more harm than good. Let us remember that we are consecrated to righteousness, to follow that which is good. Let us also remember that not merely in the Church are we to render no evil for evil, but amongst all men; for we have pledged our lives to follow that which is good under all conditions and circumstances.

According to the standard of God's Word, the disciples of Christ should be the most polished, the most courteous, the most refined, the most generous, the most kind and considerate, of all people. Theirs should not be merely an outward appearance of these graces, so common to the world, but should be a kindness, a gentleness, which springs from the heart, because of the possession of the Lord's Spirit, the spirit of justice, of mercy and of love. Thus they are to let their light shine in their lives.

Different Instructions During Jewish Age

Under the Jewish Law it was different in some respects. Every Jew was an avenger of God, to render just punishment for any crime. He who sins shall suffer, was the principle; and this is a right principle. During the period of the Law Dispensation it was very necessary, evidently, that these lessons of just retribution for sin should be deeply impressed upon the people of Israel. So during that time it was commanded that if a man shed blood, by man should his blood be shed. (Exodus 21:12; Leviticus 24:13-20; Numbers 35:9-33.) If they saw their neighbor do a wrong, they were to help adjust that wrong. They were to have this principle of justice thoroughly ingrained, because it is a principle of God's character. This rule held good from the days of Noah. (Genesis 9:6.) It is right, too, that laws of justice be enforced by the world at the present time as far as they are able.

When Christ's Kingdom is set up, The Christ will know how to make all due allowances for those who are weak. But we are instructed from the Scriptures that the Lord's people in the present time are not to judge the heart nor to be the avengers of justice. Neither are we to attempt to exact justice for ourselves; but we are to learn and to practise the principles of kindness, mercy and love. The Church are to live on a different plane, a higher plane, than any others, not rendering evil for evil, but, contrariwise, returning good for evil.

We are to bear in mind that we are ourselves imperfect. We are to learn, as disciples of Christ, the great lesson of compassion. We are to show mercy by and by, when exalted to positions of power, wherever conditions shall present themselves as needing mercy; and such conditions will abound; for all will be imperfect and weak until they can progress up out of their fallen state. So if we would be fitted for that responsible and honorable position of judges of the world, we must develop the qualities of love, mercy, compassion, now. We must learn to be very pitiful with the brethren and with the world of mankind, but must take heed to ourselves. Remembering our personal responsibility to the Lord, we are to judge our own course, and see that we ever "follow that which is good," both among the brethren and with all men.—Z. 15:73, 74.

"Jehovah Is My Shepherd"

"Jehovah is my Shepherd."—Psalm 23:1.

IT IS safe to say that no other collection of poems has accomplished as much good as the Book of Psalms. Its sentiments seem to touch the soul at every turn—in joy, in sorrow. Referring to the Twenty-third Psalm, Beecher wrote, "It is the nightingale among the Psalms. It is small, of a homely feather, singing shyly out of obscurity; but it has filled the air of the whole world with melodious joy"; and Spurgeon said, "This is the Pearl of Psalms, whose soft and pure radiance delights every eye." . . .

All Wants Abundantly Supplied

The Lord's sheep, abiding in perfection of relationship with Him, will lack nothing. Their every need will be supplied. This may not mean greater earthly wealth or name or fame or luxury. The Lord's sheep are New Creatures, spirit beings, who are temporarily dwelling in the flesh like other people, but who really are waiting for their change, to be completed by a share in the First Resurrection. The Lord's blessings to Natural Israel were earthly blessings, supplying their every earthly need; but His blessings to Spiritual Israel are spiritual favors. "No good thing will He withhold" from these—yea, even chastisements and sorrowful experiences that may be necessary for their spiritual development.

The Psalm assures us that, as the Lord's sheep, we shall be provided with green pastures and the cool, refreshing waters of Truth. Moreover, while thus being spiritually fed and refreshed, we shall have the peace of God, as is implied in the suggestion that the sheep will lie down in the green pastures. But alas! Not all of the sheep have full confidence in the Shepherd and are fully resigned to have no will but His. Some are continually getting into difficulty, because they neglect the green pastures and cool, refreshing waters of Truth found in the Word of God—because, goat-like, they sometimes wander off into the desert, straying far from the Shepherd and attempting to feed themselves on the indigestible things of the present life, on which no spiritual nature can thrive.

Yet even such straying sheep the Shepherd will not leave, if they have become truly His. He goes after them, as the Psalm represents. His rod and His staff are their comfort. With the rod he beats off their enemies, the wolves that would injure; and with the crook of His staff He wisely and carefully assists the entangled sheep out of its difficulties—out from amongst the cares of this life, the entanglements and deceitfulness of riches, and the besetments of sin and of Satan. Many of the sheep of the Lord's flock thus can sing, "He restoreth my soul"—He brings me back to Himself; He makes me again to know, to appreciate, to enjoy His provision for me and to see how much better it is than anything I could have provided for myself.

A further experience is next brought to our view—the Shepherd's leading. "He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness." He causes me, even by my own stumblings and difficulties, to learn to appreciate the desirableness of His ways and the undesirableness of every other way. All His ways are perfect, are righteous. He leads us not contrary to our wills, but in harmony therewith, to prove what is the good, next the acceptable, and finally the perfect will of God.—Romans 12:2.

The Valley of Death's Shadow

All of our lives we have been in the shadow of this great Valley of Death. Only father Adam was ever on the mountain-tops of life. He lost his footing there, and descended gradually the slopes into this Valley of the Shadow of Death. We, his children, were all born here. We are dying daily; we are surrounded by dying conditions. We have merely the hope that the Lord will lead His sheep back to the heights of life. He is now leading His sheep of this Gospel Age—the Church, the Body of Christ. By and by He will lead the world, during His Millennial Kingdom; as He declared, "Other sheep I have, that are not of this fold; them also must I bring. . . . and there shall be one fold and one Shepherd."—John 10:16.

> "Oh, sometimes the shadows are deep,
> And rough seems the path to the goal!"

The end of this Valley of Shadow is near, not merely in the sense that we shall soon reach the end of life's journey, but especially in the sense that the New Day is about to dawn, of which the Lord, our Shepherd, declared the result: "The Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His beams." (Malachi 4:2.) The final result will be that there shall be no more sighing, no more crying, no more dying; but the whole world will begin to emerge from the Valley of the Shadow of Death. For a thousand years they will be rising again to the glorious heights of human perfection from which Adam fell, and the right to return to which is secured for all by the death of Jesus, "the Just for the unjust."

The Church's Better Table

But this precious Psalm seems especially to apply to the Church, as we have said. Thus we appropriately read that the Lord's people of the present time have an especially prepared table, where they may partake even in the presence of their enemies. That will not be true in the future: for no enemies nor anything to hurt or injure shall then be permitted. (Isaiah 11:9.) But how true it is that the Lord's consecrated people, even when misunderstood, misrepresented, defamed and opposed, are still privileged to feast at the Lord's Table! The table represents God's provision for their needs —the promises of God, the assurances of His favor, etc.

Another evidence that the Psalm belongs especially to the Church is the statement, "Thou anointest my Head with oil." Jesus, the Head of the Church, was anointed with the oil of gladness above His fellows. That holy anointing oil used on the priests and kings of Israel typified the Holy Spirit, which came upon the Church representatively in Jesus. And this same anointing oil has come down over all the members of the Church, which is the Body of Christ, as we read in Psalm 133:2.

The Cup Both Sweet and Bitter

"My cup runneth over." The word cup is used in the Scriptures to represent a draft, sometimes sweet, sometimes bitter, sometimes both. The intimation is that the Lord's cup signifies bitter experiences and trials in the present time; as Jesus said, "The Cup which My Father hath poured for Me, shall I not drink it?" And this was the Cup—His Cup— which He offered to His disciples and which we, in becoming His disciples, propose to share with Him, and which is symbolically represented in the Communion Cup.—1 Corinthians 10:15-17.

It is sweet and precious, in many senses of the word, to be privileged to participate in the sufferings of Christ, in any sacrifices or services for the Lord and His Cause. The sweet mingles freely with the bitter. But the Lord promises that in the future the Cup of new wine in the Kingdom shall more than compensate for any bitterness of the present time. Our Cup is full, but we would not wish it one drop less.

"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life." How precious the thought—God's goodness, God's mercy, with all those who are truly His in Christ—following us day by day, moment by moment, and according to the Scriptures making all things work together for our good! Then the grand finale is signified, "I shall dwell in the House of the Lord forever"—in the Heavenly House, of which the Redeemer said, "In My Father's House are many mansions: . . . I go to prepare a place for you," and "I will come again and receive you unto Myself." Then, at His Second Coming, with our glorious change, we shall enter the Father's House in the fullest sense of the word, on the spirit plane, which flesh and blood does not inherit.

This shall be the everlasting portion of God's Elect—the Church. The great blessings subsequently to come to the world—earthly blessings—will in no sense interfere with, but enhance, the glory of the Church; for she will be engaged with her Lord in dispensing blessings to the earthly sheep.—Galatians 3:29; Z. '14:90-92.

Dwelling Together in Unity

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"—Psalm 133:1.

IN SOME earthly families there is a considerable degree of unity. Of such we sometimes say, "This family all seem to pull together." In other families there seems to be a pulling apart. When we see husband and wife, brothers and sisters, seeking to help one another, we say, "There is a great deal of love in that family." By this we mean an earthly love—a certain amount of animal love. This disposition is a right one. The Bible seems to imply that there is an obligation, a special duty, to those who are near to us. The Scriptures say that a man should not neglect his own household. He that careth not for his own is worse than an unbeliever.—1 Timothy 5:8.

Man was originally created in the image of God, and had love Divine as the inspiring influence in his life. This love has been largely effaced by selfishness, which is the representative of sin. In proportion as people are fallen, to that extent they are selfish. Some are kind and generous to the members of their own family, and seek to co-operate in helping one another. We cannot say that this is not a right principle, if, in seeking to do for its own, it does not injure others. Brothers and sisters should sympathize with one another, and have a spirit of helpfulness one toward another. Wherever we see this spirit in a family we say, "That is a delightful family."

There are other families where there seems to be a personal selfishness, and no brotherly sympathy at all. In such families there is a desire to do more for an outsider than for one of their own. The members see more blemishes in their own than in others. In such cases, justice is lacking. Whenever the principle of justice is overridden, a spirit of antagonism is engendered instead of love, and under such conditions there is no unity possible.

Friction the Result of Selfishness

Let us apply this rule to the Lord's family—the Church. God has organized a new family in the world—not according to any earthly ties, but according to the Spirit of God. This family consists of those who have been begotten of the one Spirit of the Father. What a beautiful family it is! We see a type of this family in the days of Gideon. All the sons of Joash, Gideon's father, were different from the others of Israel in their general appearance. It is written that they resembled the children of kings. (Judges 8:18.) So should it be with us. As we have the Spirit of the Lord, we should shine out in our words and deeds, and in every way should "show forth the praises of Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light."—1 Peter 2:9.

Evidently the principle of selfishness is the root from which all disagreements emanate. Surely there is nothing of selfishness in the Lord's Spirit. Whence then is this spirit of strife and discord which sometimes manifests itself among the Lord's people? One sets himself up and seeks to take away the rights and liberties of others. Others, having a similar spirit, may desire to be clannish. One says, "I am of Paul"; another, "I am of Apollos," a third, "I am of Christ." This spirit is wrong. St. Paul points out that there is none other than Christ to whom we should be united.

The most favorable condition for unity is that all seek to have the Lord's will done in their mortal bodies. The only difficulty that could then arise would result from ignorance or from weakness of the flesh that had not been overcome or that could not be overcome. The other members of the congregation, having the Spirit of the Master, would assume that the erring brother was merely ignorant, and not wilfully in opposition. Therefore in all kindness and gentleness they would seek to point out the will of the Father as expressed in Christ. The younger brother would be glad to have this done, because he would have the Spirit of Christ.

If the difficulty were one of the flesh, the brethren should recognize that it was merely a weakness of the flesh, and sympathetically they should point out to the brother wherein he had come short. In turn, he should make apology for his mistake. Then he should be freely forgiven. So he would learn and would come into proper unity with the other brethren. Thus we are all, at the present time, to have the Spirit of the Master, and so far as possible to live together in unity.

"No Schism in the Body"

It is, however, not possible always to "dwell together in unity" with everybody. It would be impossible for God and Satan thus to dwell. There are some people who have the spirit of Satan. We could have no unity with such a one. There would be polishing from coming in contact with such, but there could be no unity; for what fellowship could light have with darkness? On one occasion St. Paul wrote to the Corinthian Church, "I hear that there are divisions among you." Then he proceeded to say that it must be so, in order that whatever was wrong might come to the surface, that the inharmony of the situation might be realized, and that the one in the wrong might be led to go out, because he was an intruder. (1 Corinthians 11:18, 19.) Recognizing his position, such a one would go out, saying by his action, "I am not a member of the Body of Christ; these are the Lord's people." Or, failing to go out, he should be advised to do so.

Those who are not brethren, who are not children of light, but children of darkness, associating with the brethren, must be dealt with along the lines of the Divine direction laid down in Matthew 18:15-17. We may not take any measures not Scriptural. This is the only method.

We have seen great machines running with great precision and very little commotion. The parts are dwelling together in unity; all are working in perfect order, because they are well put together. They could not fall together, or there would be merely a rattling. The family of God are like a great machine. The setting of the members in the Body is under the supervision of the great Engineer, who brings them into the spirit of harmony, through the impartation of His own Spirit.

The working of a new engine or other machine is very slow at first, because there is a certain amount of friction engendered when the parts begin to move. So when the engineer finds that there is friction in any of the parts, he puts on a little lubricating oil, and thus prevents injury. When the parts are worn smooth, there is little danger of friction. So with the members of the Body of Christ. When they are new in the Body we must expect some friction, and then we should exercise more of the Spirit of the Lord. And we should be very sure of our own spirit, of our own intention.

Even if the one causing friction should not be of the Body, even if he were a stranger—no part of the machine to which he is attaching himself—there would be all the more need of oil. We should, therefore, remember that no matter how well developed each member may be, he will need the Holy Spirit. If we find any member unendurable, we should go to the Lord in prayer and ask for more of His Spirit, that we may exercise more patience and more brotherly-kindness in dealing with that one. So shall we be pleasing to the Lord, and helpful in building one another up and in doing good unto all men, especially to the Household of Faith—Z. '13: 133, 134.

Those who made a covenant to sacrifice their lives in the service of the Lord, the Truth and the brethren, and who on the strength of this were begotten of the Spirit to a spirit nature, and who subsequently neglected to fulfil their covenant or vow, would be liable to the Second Death on this account; but in great mercy the Lord purposes to pass them through a "great tribulation" and to accept as "conquerors" those who will stand the tests of that time of trouble loyally.—Z. '08:332.

Those who stand for the right must be content to be of the minority, but their faith will be strengthened by the assurance that he that is for us is more than all that be against us.—Z. '05:143.

"Truth is Stranger than Fiction"

(Continued from O.C.G. No. 81.)

I WENT to the Lord with this as with every trial, told him just how it seemed to me, how anxious I felt for his dear "sheep," who, having their appetites sharpened by some truth, were by their very hunger exposed to Satan's deceptions. I told him that I realized that he was the Shepherd, and not I, but that I knew also that he would be pleased at my interest in the sheep and my desire to be his mouthpiece to declare the truth, the way and the life to them; that I felt deeply impressed that if the time had come for the permission of a false view to deceive the unworthy, it must also be his due time to have the truth on the same subject made clear, that the worthy ones might be enabled to stand, and not fall from the truth. Believing that the due time had come for the correct understanding of the meaning of the Jewish sacrifices, which in a general way all Christians concede were **typical** of "better sacrifices," and that the Lord would grant the insight as soon as I got into the attitude of heart best fitted to receive the light, I prayed with confidence that if the Lord's due time had come, and if he were willing to use me as his instrument to declare the message to his dear family, that I might be enabled to rid my heart and mind of any prejudice that might stand in the way and be led of his spirit into the proper understanding.

Believing that the prayer would be answered affirmatively, I went into my study next morning prepared to study and write. The forenoon I spent in scrutinizing the text and every other Scripture likely to shed light upon it, especially the epistle to the Hebrews, and in looking to the Lord for wisdom and guidance; but no solution of the difficult passage came. The afternoon and evening were similarly spent, and all of the next day. Everything else was neglected, and I wondered why the Lord kept me so long; but on the third day near noon the whole matter came to me as clear as the noon-day sun—so clear and convincing and so harmonious with the whole tenor of Scripture, that I could not question its correctness; and no one has ever yet been able to find a flaw in it. (This has been published in several editions in pamphlet form under the title, **"Tabernacle Shadows of the Better Sacrifices."**

Then I knew why the Lord had led me to it so slowly and cautiously. I needed a special preparation of heart for the full appreciation of all it contained, and I was all the more assured that it was not of my own wisdom; for if of my own why would it not have come at once? I found that the understanding of that subject was bound to have a wide influence upon all our hopes and views of all truths—not that it overturned old truths or contradicted them, but, on the contrary, that it set them all in order and harmony and straightened out little knots and twists. For instance, the doctrine of "justification by **faith"** had always been more or less confused in my mind, as it is in every mind, with the doctrine of "sanctification" which calls for self-sacrifice and **works.** This was all made clear and plain at once; for the types showed that we all, as sinners, needed first of all Christ's ransom sacrifice, that we appropriate its merits (justification—forgiveness) to ourselves by **faith,** and that **thus** we are justified (reckoned free from sin) when, turning from sin, we by faith accept of Christ's sacrifice on our behalf. The type showed, too, that it is only **after** being thus cleansed in God's sight (by our acceptance of Christ's finished work as our ransom-sacrifice) that God is willing to accept us as joint **sacrificers** with Christ, so that if faithful to the end, following in his footsteps, we should be granted the favor of joint-heirship with him.

Here I first saw that the great privilege of becoming joint-heirs with Christ and partakers with him of the divine nature was **confined exclusively** to those who would share with him in **self-sacrifice in** the service of the Truth. And here, too, I saw for the first time that the Lord was the **first** of these sacrifices of the Sin-Offering; consequently, that none of God's servants, the prophets, who lived and died before Christ, were priests after his order, nor sharers in sacrifice with him, even though some of them were stoned, others sawn asunder and others slain with the sword, for the cause of God; that though they would get a good and great reward, they would belong to a separate class and order from those called to sacrifice and joint-heirship with Christ on and since Pentecost. Here, too, I first saw that "the **acceptable day** of the Lord" signifies this Gospel age—the time during which he will **accept the sacrifice** of any who come unto God through Christ, the great Sin-Offering; that when this acceptable day ends, the reward of joint-heirship and change to the divine nature ends; and that when this great day of sacrifice, the Gospel age (the real day of Atonement), has closed, when all the members of the body of Christ have participated with him in the sacrifice of their rights as justified men, and been glorified, then the blessing will begin to come to the world—the Millennial blessings purchased for men by their Redeemer, according to the grace of God.

This first brought a clear recognition of the distinction of natures—of what constitutes human nature, what constitutes angelic nature and what constitutes divine nature, as shown in **Millennial Dawn,** Vol. I., Chapter x. And whereas we formerly used the word **restitution** in a general way to mean **some sort of blessed change,** now, under the clearer light, we began to see that the great work of restitution could only mean what the word implies—a restoration of that which was lost (Matt. 18:11)—a restoration to the original condition from which man once fell. Then I saw that God's plan, when carried out, would not bring all his creatures to the one level of the divine nature, but that he purposed to have an order of creatures called Angels, who, though perfect, would always be of a different order, or nature, from the **divine nature,** and he likewise purposed to have a race of beings of the **human**

nature, of whom Adam was a sample or pattern, and whose future earthly home, Paradise, Eden was a sample or pattern. I also saw that God purposed that Christ and his joint-sacrificers and joint-heirs are to be God's instruments for blessing the fallen race and **restoring** them to the condition of perfection enjoyed by Adam in Eden—a condition which God said was "very good," and an image of himself. And these joint-heirs with Christ, I saw, were to be highly exalted to a nature higher than restored and perfect manhood, higher, too, than the angelic nature —even to be partakers of the divine nature. When all these things so unexpectedly shone out so brightly and clearly, I did not wonder that the Lord gave me several days of waiting and preparation for the blessing, and to him I rendered praise and thanks. All my faintness of heart and fear of the bad effect of the wrong view fled before this evidence of the Lord's leading in the pathway that "shines more and more unto the perfect day." I saw at once that these new developments would probably prove a stumbling block to some, as well as a great blessing to others who were ready for them. Instead, therefore, of publishing it in the next **Tower,** I determined to first present the matter privately to the more prominent brethren;—remembering Paul's course in a similar matter.—Gal. 2:2.

Accordingly I sent invitations and the money necessary for traveling expenses to four of the more prominent brethren, requesting a conference. Mr. Paton from Michigan was one of the four, and the only one who rejected the fresh rays of light. Nor could he find any fault with the exegesis, though urged, as all were, to state anything which might seem inconsistent, or to quote any passages of Scripture thought to be in conflict. But there were none; and every question only demonstrated more fully the strength of the position. I therefore urged that what was beyond the criticism of those most familiar with the plan of God must be the truth, and ought to be confessed and taught at any cost, and especially when it arranged and ordered all the other features of truth so beautifully. I pointed out, too, how necessary it was to a logical holding of the **ransom,** to see just what this showed; viz.: the distinctions of nature—that our Lord left a higher nature, and took a lower nature when he was made flesh, and that the object in that change of nature was, that he might, as a man, a perfect man, give himself a **ransom** for the first perfect man, Adam, and thus redeem Adam, and all lost in him. I also showed how, as a reward for this great work, he was given the **divine nature** in his resurrection—a nature still higher than the glorious one he had left, when he became a man. But either Mr. Paton's mental vision or heart was weak, for he never took the step; and before long he, too, forsook the doctrine of the ransom. Yet he still used the word "ransom," while denying the idea conveyed by the word; nor can he give the word any other definition, or otherwise dispute the correctness of the meaning which I attach to it—which may be found in any English dictionary and is true to the significance of the Greek word which it translates, **anti-lutron,** a price to correspond.

Notwithstanding our best endeavors to save him he drifted farther and farther away, until I was obliged to refuse his articles for the **Tower** for the same reason that obliged me to refuse to longer spend the Lord's money entrusted to me to assist Mr. Barbour to spread the same pernicious theory.

It was about this time that Mr. Jones informed me that the copies of the book **Day Dawn** which I had purchased last were all that were left; and, announcing it so that no more orders for it might come to the Tower office, I took occasion to promise **Millennial Dawn,** which should present the Plan of the Ages in the clearer, more orderly manner made possible by the new light shed upon every feature of it by the lessons from the Tabernacle. About this time Mr. Paton concluded that he would publish another book under the name **Day Dawn,** revised to harmonize with his changed views, which ignored the ransom, ignored justification and the need of either, and taught that all men will be everlastingly saved—not in any sense as the result of any sacrifice for their sin by Christ, but as the result of each one's crucifying sin in himself—the law under which the poor Jews tried to commend themselves to God, but which justified none. Many and severe were the calumnies heaped upon me, because I exposed this **change,** told that the original was out of print and that the new book was on a different foundation from the book of the same name which I had commended.

During this time I was busied by an immense work known to many of you—the issue and circulation of over 1,400,000 copies of two pamphlets, entitled **Food for Thinking Christians and Tabernacle Teachings,** whose united matter was about the same as that of **Dawn,** Vol. I.; and besides this I was flooded with thousands of joyous and joy-giving letters, from those who had received and were reading the pamphlets thus distributed, and asking questions and more reading matter. To add to our throng, financial complications came; and thus for four years I was hindered from fulfilling my promise of **Millennial Dawn.** Nor is our promise of the complete set yet fulfilled; for although six volumes are now issued, a seventh on Revelation and Ezekiel is still future (1906), delayed by the growth of the general work, doubtless in accord with the Lord's "due time." But during those four years I struggled through an immense amount of labor and many drawbacks (all **cheerfully** undergone for the sake of the Lord and his saints), each year hoping to be able to gather the hours necessary to complete the first volume of **Millennial Dawn.**

Some who have **The Three Worlds** or the old edition of **Day Dawn** would perhaps like to know my present opinion of them—whether I still think them profitable books to loan to truth-seekers. To this I reply, Certainly not; because the very immature views of God's truth therein presented fall far short of what we now see to be God's wonderful plan. Things which are now clear as noonday were then cloudy and mixed. The distinctions between the perfect **human** nature to which the obedient of the world will be **restored** during the Millennium, and the **divine** nature to which the little flock, the sacrificing elect of the Gospel age, are soon to be **exalted,** were then unnoticed. All now so clear was then blurred, mixed and indistinct. Neither had we then seen the steps or planes, shown upon the Chart of the Ages, **Millennial Dawn,** Vol. I., which have assisted so many to distinguish between justification and sanctification, and to determine their present standing and relationship to God.

Once I was much less careful about what I circulated or commended, but I am learning every day to be more careful as to what sort of food I put before any of the Lord's hungry sheep. The Lord has taught me that it is a responsible matter to be a teacher, even to the extent of circulating a book or a paper. Even **Food for Thinking Christians** (now also out of print), I no longer commend because it is less systematic and therefore less clear than later publications. (Vol. I., **Millennial Dawn,** in magazine form, the special "Hell" edition of the **Watch Tower,** Jan. 15, '01, and Tract No. 52, all bear this title, and are not to be confounded with the original booklet issued in 1881.)—Z. '06: 234-236.

(Concluded in O.C.G. No. 83.)

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Rev. 22:14, 15. . . . When we read that no drunkard or murderer or robber shall enter the Kingdom, the New Jerusalem, how shall we understand it? In this way: that when during the Millennial Kingdom all mankind shall have the opportunity of coming into harmony with God, those who maintain a sympathy or love for unrighteousness of any kind will not have Divine approval. They will not be permitted to enter within the gate of the City, which symbolically represents the Kingdom and the Divine favor. . . . Into that City there would be brought the good only. So all the world of mankind who will come into harmony with God will come into that City, into the New Jerusalem and Kingdom of God, and outside of that City will be found all impure characters. We have them pictured in the statement, that liars and murderers, etc., shall have their portion in the "lake which burneth with fire and brimstone."—Z. '12: 95, 96.

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If the Adversary could stir us up to anger, malice, hatred and strife, even in a good cause—even against Satan or those whom he is using to some extent as his servants (Rom. 6:16)—he would thus be poisoning our hearts and separating us proportionately from the Lord and his Spirit. We cannot be too careful along these lines!—Z. '09: 359.

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The general weakness and frailty of our fallen human nature, and the fact that we are surrounded by temptations, make it necessary that the New Creature in Christ should continually watch as well as pray lest he enter into temptation. **None** achieve such strength of character nor attain to such heights of spiritual development as would permit them to glory in the flesh or insure them against ever yielding to its seductive influences. Hence it is, the Apostle assures us, that when we realize our weakness and our dependence upon the Lord for grace to help in every time of need, then we are really strong; whereas when we feel strong, sufficient of ourselves, self-confident, we are really in danger.—Z. '06: 359, 360.

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The word comfort does not contain the thought of relief, but rather that of **strengthen together,** or added strength. In other words the Lord does not propose to take from us that noble quality of sympathy which we receive in the school of experience, but he does propose for all those who become his true followers that they shall be comforted or strengthened together, that he will give them a blessing of strength to endure, which will compensate their mourning and spirit of heaviness. He gives this through the promises of His Word and the glorious hopes which he sets before us, and he gives it also through the living epistles of the dear members of the household of faith.—Z. '06: 72.

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The more we leave, the more we sacrifice, the greater our present loss for the Kingdom's sake, the greater will be our reward both now and hereafter. O, if we could only have this thought well in mind continually how we would vie with one another in our endeavors to spend and be spent in the service of so gracious a Master and in so glorious a mission and with so grand prospects and rewards. —Z. '06: 271.

◆

The fact that the Lord led into the light of "Present Truth" and showed us the "Secret," the "Mystery," implies that he would not let us be plucked out of his hand and away from his leading unless the **heart** was at fault.—Z. '09: 376.

◆

All our blessings come from God, and come to us as gifts; but these gifts, to be of value to us in the end, must be received, must be used, must be appropriated, must be worked out in mind and heart, and so far as possible in our mortal bodies. The inspiration of God's promise first worked in us to will and to do his will, to lay down our all at his feet; and secondly, as we followed on, these promises continued to work in us to the point of doing service, putting into practice our good wills, good intentions—but only those who do put them into practice will get the eventual blessing of the Kingdom.—Z. '07:148.

◆

"WHY ART THOU WROTH?"

The power to be angry, the power to be wroth, is not a result of the fall. The Lord uses these same words in reference to his own attitude of mind at times, declaring that he was wroth under certain conditions and that he is angry with the wicked every day. (Psa. 7:11.) The force of character which permits of anger is the very same force which otherwise directed signifies intensity of love: the inability to be angry under proper cause would imply imperfection, blemishes, just as inability to love strongly would imply similar defects of character. To be perfect implies a full-rounded capacity in every direction. The perfectly shaped head would not be a bumpy one representing some of the organs large and others small, but would be a well-rounded head in all particulars. In such a perfect organization, while every power would be there, the higher powers of veneration for God, spirituality, conscience, etc., should be in control and indicate when combativeness, destructiveness, should and when it should not be exercised. It is a mistake to suppose that a perfect being would be deficient in combativeness: on the contrary, every Christian must have this quality of mind, otherwise how could he become an "overcomer"? how could he "fight the good fight"? The desirable thing is that every organ of our heads should be perfect, and that these all shall be under the perfect control and regulation of the higher reasoning faculties.—Z. '07:26.

◇

When we note the divine providential care over God's typical people it increases our faith and trust as his spiritual children, for with the Apostle we reason that if God so loved us while we were yet sinners as to give his Son for us, much more does he love us now that we are no more sinners, aliens, strangers, foreigners, but consecrated to him and seeking to walk in the footsteps of our Redeemer. Likewise we reason that if God exercised his providential care in the interests of the typical people he is both able and willing to do as much and more for his spiritual Israel—Israelites indeed, in whom there is no guile—those who have entered into covenant relationship with him and are seeking to walk not after the flesh but after the spirit.—Z. '05:332.

◇

"THIS IS MY BELOVED SON: HEAR HIM."

The essence of the entire vision was to impress upon the minds of the apostles the fact that Jesus was the Messiah, that he was worthy of being heard, that he was the mouthpiece of God, that he that honored him honored the Father also. This voice was heard from the cloud, which represented the darkness and trouble which would be permitted to come upon the Lord's followers in the midst of all the trials of the dark days that were coming upon them in connection with Jesus' rejection by the Jews, his scourging, dishonor, crucifixion, death, burial. In all this they were to remember the voice of the Father, "This is my beloved Son," and were not to be discouraged nor allow their faith to grow faint. Similarly throughout this Gospel age the Lord has frequently permitted the same dark cloud to come over his faithful ones, that they might be the better prepared also to listen to his Word, his message, "This is my beloved Son," and this vision of the Holy Mount is an assurance respecting the glorious Kingdom which he will establish, which will be the end of darkness and trouble.

As the apostles were overpowered by the brilliancy of the vision and feared when they entered the cloud and heard the voice, so we in our weak and imperfect conditions sometimes find it difficult to grasp the glorious things which God hath set before us. The picture of the things unseen as yet is so wonderful as to amaze us. The fact that we have been invited to be heirs of God and associates with Jesus Christ our Lord in his Kingdom is too wonderful for us to grasp. We begin to fear lest we should fail in so great an undertaking. It is well for us to realize our own littleness and unworthiness, and to see that the whole matter is of the divine arrangement. It is well for us under the circumstances that the dark cloud of trouble and opposition is permitted to keep us very humble, that we may indeed fall on our faces in the dust. It is well that we should listen to the voice from heaven, saying, "This is my beloved Son: hear him." It is well that we should hear the Son assuring us that all things shall work together for good to those who love God. It is well that we should exercise faith in him that speaketh from heaven, lest we should become weary and faint in our minds. It is well that the Master teach us as he taught his disciples, and that looking up we should see Jesus only, that we should realize that in him alone is our help, that God hath laid help upon one who is mighty to deliver, and that so realizing that all of our help is in Christ Jesus we should hold fast to the relationship which we have already secured through faith in his blood and through consecration to him.—Z. '06:184.

◇

If one pursue the path of darkness and call it light, thus deceiving himself and others, we cannot endorse him and be guiltless. To do so is to add our influence in some measure, at least, to the error and in opposition to the Truth, and thus we become partaker of his evil deeds.—Z. '11:121.

◇

The great King commands his consecrated people to purify the temple of God, which is the Church, "from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the reverence of the Lord." (2 Cor. 7:1.) In proportion as this is done, a blessed influence will go forth from the temple of God, the true Church, far reaching upon all those who love righteousness and hate iniquity.—Z. '11:140.

◇

Those who in the present time have loved righteousness and hated iniquity, and have sought to comfort and benefit their fellows, especially those who would give even a cup of cold water to a disciple of the Lord because he was his disciple—all such would be found to be benefited proportionately in that day of glorious possibilities. Thus the Lord's words would signify that any who would give a cup of cold water or who would bless the maimed and the blind and the poor would experience a reward and blessing in that future time which would follow the resurrection of the just—in the Millennial age. —Z. '06:249.

◇

TRULY BEAUTIFUL

Beautiful hands are they that do
The work of the noble, good and true,
Busy for them the long day through;
Beautiful faces—they that wear
The light of a pleasing spirit there,
It matters little if dark or fair;
And truly beautiful in God's sight,
Are the precious souls who love the right.
—Z. '12:359.

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Old Corn Gems

NUMBER EIGHTY-THREE

"And they did eat of the OLD CORN of the land on the morrow after the Passover . . . and the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the OLD CORN of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year." Joshua 5:11-12.

A SAFE RULE

"WHERE A BROTHER GIVES AN INTERPRETATION OF A SCRIPTURE WHICH DIFFERS FROM THAT GIVEN BY BROTHER RUSSELL, AND BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION SEEMS REASONABLE AND IN HARMONY WITH THE PLAN OF GOD, THEN WE BELIEVE IT A SAFE RULE TO FOLLOW BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION, FOR THE REASON THAT HE IS THE SERVANT OF THE CHURCH, SO CONSTITUTED BY THE LORD FOR THE LAODICEAN PERIOD; AND THEREFORE WE SHOULD EXPECT THE LORD TO TEACH US THROUGH HIM. WHERE THERE ARISES A DOUBT IN THE MIND AS TO WHICH INTERPRETATION IS CORRECT, THEN IT IS ALWAYS SAFER TO RESOLVE THAT DOUBT IN FAVOR OF BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION. WE BELIEVE SUCH TO BE IN HARMONY WITH THE LORD'S WILL." Z. '18:51.

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The Purpose of Miracles

John 4: 43-54.

Golden Text:—"The same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me."—John 5:36.

A CONSIDERABLE length apparently intervened between our Lord's first miracle at Cana in Galilee and the one recorded in this lesson. Evidently our Lord in the interim had been at Jerusalem, because we read that he was well received by the Galileans, who had "seen all the things that he did at Jerusalem at the feast: for they also went unto the feast." It is evident, therefore, that the Lord performed miracles in Jerusalem at this time that are not mentioned in the direct order of their occurrence. . . .

"A prophet hath no honor in his own country," and it may have been in recognition of this proverb that our Lord commenced his ministry at Jerusalem rather than in Galilee, which was his "own country," —he and his disciples being recognized as "Galileans." Anyway the knowledge of his mighty works and teachings in Judea had by this time reached Galilee. He had honor amongst his own countrymen because of his fame in Judea, and hence, as we read, they received him more respectfully than they otherwise would have done. He probably now found a better opportunity for public ministry than he did on the occasion of his first visit to Cana.

Human nature is much the same in all ages and in all places: it esteems that which is distant as grander, more wonderful than that which is near. We have all seen the same fact illustrated under various circumstances. The poet, the philosopher, the teacher, the talented, are not first recognized at home. How little those who heard our Lord realized the privileges they enjoyed—that the very Son of God was amongst them, that the Teacher of Teachers was addressing them, that the special Ambassador was in their midst. To a limited extent the same thing has been true throughout the Gospel age, for the Lord's consecrated people have been all the way down his representatives, as he said, "He that receiveth you, receiveth me." The Apostle reminds us along these lines that "The world knoweth us not, even as it knew him not." The world recognizes not the Lord's humble saints as being the children of the Highest, "Heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may also be glorified together." —Rom. 8:17.

None Perfect, No, Not One

Some one has remarked, "When a hero or a saint is seen to eat and drink, live and dress, like an ordinary man, weak where some are strong, ignorant of some things that others know, it is almost impossible to look over these things and recognize the hero or saint." It is the ability to look over these things and to appreciate their relationship to the Lord that enables the Lord's consecrated people to recognize themselves and each other as members of the Royal Priesthood. It is the ability to see things thus from the divine standpoint, being "taught of God" to recognize each other by the heart, the will, the intention, but not according to the flesh with its weaknesses and blemishes. Such a correct view from the Lord's standpoint is necessary before we can "love as brethren," and have this love of the brethren as one of the evidences that we have passed from death unto life—that we have been begotten again as new creatures in Christ Jesus.

A nobleman whose name is not given, whose son lay at death's door, heard of our Lord's coming into Galilee, and recognized him as the one of whose mighty works in Judea he had previously heard. He at once went evidently a considerable journey to see the Lord and to request that he visit his home and heal his son, who was sick. Our Lord, by the way of testing his faith, said, "Except ye see signs and wonders ye will not believe." Apparently this was a refusal of the nobleman's request and had his faith been slight he probably would have accepted it thus. On the contrary so great was his confidence that our Lord was able to heal his son that he entreated that the Lord go in haste, lest the boy should be dead on their arrival. Having thus tested his faith and made it stronger, our Lord answered the request and healed the son, but in a manner calculated still further to strengthen his faith. He told him to return home and he would find his son cured. The fact that the nobleman at once set out for home is an evidence that he had great confidence in the Lord —a faith worthy of reward.

Diverse Dealings, One Providence

A lesson for us in this connection is that our Lord deals similarly with all of his people at times. (1) Often he does not answer our prayers immediately, but, delaying the answer, tests our faith, our earnestness, our confidence in him. He is pleased to have us hold on to him by faith, which strengthens our own hearts, by reiterations of his promises and reflections on his goodness and power. (2) When he does grant our requests the blessing frequently comes to us through a different channel or in a different manner from that we had in mind. As an illustration, a dear brother remarked to us recently that for an entire year the principal element of his prayer to the Lord had been for increase of heavenly wisdom, and that in no year had he seemed to be more unwise as respected earthly things—in no year had he been less prosperous from a worldly standpoint. Another remarked that the special feature of his prayer for a year had been for an increase of patience, and that in no year had he seemed to have so many trials and difficulties and testings of patience. The lesson is obvious—"whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth."

If the Lord would teach heavenly wisdom it must imply just such lessons as would win our hearts from temporalities and place them more and more upon the riches of his grace, the heavenly wisdom; if the Lord would teach patience it must be by showing us our own lack of this quality and permitting us to pass through trials and difficulties in which he is pleased to place us, and assist us in overcoming and gaining patience. Similarly with all the fruits and graces of the Spirit; they must be developed, and the school of experience is a severe one. Nevertheless we would not be without such experiences, such lessons, for unless we are taught of God, unless we learn the lessons due to be learned in the present time, we would not be fitted and prepared to be the Lord's instruments in blessing and instructing the world during the Millennial age about to be ushered in. Let us learn these lessons of faith and patience and wisdom. Let us learn to look to the Lord and accept his way, and not expect him to gratify our whims and fancies. The true prayer of the consecrated is, "Thy will be done."

Another lesson for us is that while sickness, pain, sorrow and death are all parts of the great penalty for sin, yet the Lord is able to turn all these painful experiences into valuable lessons for his people—for those who trust him and seek to learn the lessons in his school. Our Lord did not heal all the sick nor awaken all the dead of the Jewish nation at his first advent. That great work belongs to the future, to the Millennial Kingdom. What he did do in these directions was merely to illustrate his power. They were miracles, intended more for the instruction they would give than for the blessings they contained. Had our Lord merely been intent upon comforting the bereaved, healing the sick and awakening those in the sleep of death, he might have accomplished a thousand-fold more than he did. He might at one word have healed all the sick and awakened all the sleeping ones, but he had no such purpose. That glorious work is future; and what our Lord did was merely a sign, an indication, a wonder to the people to attract their attention to him, to establish in their minds the thought that he was indeed the Son of God, and thus to prepare their hearts for the spiritual truths which he uttered in parables, and which after Pentecost were plainly stated through his mouthpieces, the apostles.

What Miracles Are

There are many different views of miracles. Some call them violations of the laws of nature, and deny that nature's laws ever could be set aside. The numbers of those who deny that the Lord performed miracles or that any miracles ever were performed seem to increase daily. We are living in a very sceptical age. From the standpoint of faith, from the standpoint of the scriptural teaching, we must believe in miracles; but such belief does not imply that miracles set aside the laws of nature. In our view miracles are entirely co-operative with the laws of nature. More and more we should learn that all the forces of nature are under spiritual control. We may not understand this, but we can believe it nevertheless. We have illustrations of such mental or spiritual control all about us, as also in our own bodies for instance. The human mind, the will, is of itself invisible, yet it controls the nerves, muscles, sinews, bones, our entire human anatomy.

And if this be true, if the human will can move the human hand, the human foot, and if without the will these could not move, does that will interfere with the laws of nature either in moving or in staying the hand and the foot? Assuredly not: it is part and parcel of the laws of nature that the will should control and direct the physical system. Likewise we may see that the divine mind or will has control not only of the divine being but also of all things in the universe. How fully this is true, to what extent the divine will can control all the forces of nature, it is impossible for us to appreciate because of our weakness of intellect and our limited knowledge of the forces all about us. We may have a slight conception, however, of these matters today that could not have been had a few years ago. The telephone, for instance, is as nearly a miracle as could be found—an invisible agency operating in a mysterious and unseen manner at great distances, and contrary to what we might have supposed to have been the laws of nature. We are merely asserting that there are many laws and operations of nature which are not understood, all of which are subject to the divine power.

"Then We Shall Know if We Follow on to Know the Lord"

Not until we shall experience our "change" and know as we are known shall we be able to fathom all the mysteries connected with the miracles of Jesus and the miracles which we see in ourselves and all about us today. Meantime, however, let us be on our guard against the devices of the Adversary, by which he would ensnare those who are merely looking for earthly blessings, relief from earthly troubles. We are living in a time when, apparently in order to hold his dominion, the great Adversary is going into the healing business in a wholesale manner. Through spirit mediums, hypnotists, Mormon elders, Christian Scientists and others, Satan is making a bid for power in the world. He is seeking to use such power as he possesses in a manner that will allure and ensnare those who are selfishly seeking merely for earthly blessings, ignoring the great spiritual lessons of the Lord's Word. The Lord's consecrated people should be on their guard against the Adversary's methods and the snares of false doctrines into which he would lead them by this means.

Our Lord's remark, "Except ye see signs and wonders ye will not believe," implies that the highest order of faith would be that which would not require such ocular demonstrations of divine power—that could trust the Lord without the proofs of miracles. So we find it today and so we believe it has always been. A similar lesson is found in our Lord's words to Thomas, who, after having seen the print of the nails, believed in the resurrection of Jesus. Our Lord there observed, "Because thou hast seen thou hast believed; blessed are they who not having seen yet have believed." Miracles were necessary for the introduction of the Gospel message to identify our Lord with the prophecies and to prepare the nucleus of the Church for the Spirit baptism; but in later years, throughout the Gospel age, the Lord has given his people the opportunity of still greater blessing by withholding the miracles and allowing us to believe in him and to accept him without the attestation of wonders.

One of the greatest wonders, one of the greatest miracles, one that is more convincing to us than any other could be, is the change which the divine message has wrought in our own hearts—transforming us through the power of the holy Spirit. Not only do we see this transforming power at work in others, changing them from glory to glory and preparing them for the final glorious change of the First Resurrection, but additionally we experience it in our own hearts and appreciate the fact that the things that we once hated now we love, and the things we once loved now we hate. The poet gave the right thought here when he exclaimed, "I am a miracle of grace."

Our Golden Text bears out this thought, that the miracles which our Lord did were only intended to be sufficient to establish his identity, and were not with the view of establishing a precedent for the healing of the world nor of the Church. The Lord's great healing time is designated in the Scriptures, "times of restitution." (Acts 3:21.) When those times shall come, when the Millennial Kingdom shall be established, the healing of the nations will be the great work; and it will not merely be a physical but also a mental and moral healing, which will gradually bring all in proper condition back to all that was lost in Eden, with increased knowledge through experience.—Z. '05:28-30.

The Father Himself Loveth You

John 16:27.

Be still, my soul, Jehovah loveth thee!
  Fret not, nor murmur at thy weary lot;
Though dark and lone thy journey seems to be,
  Be sure that thou art ne'er by Him forgot:
He ever loves; then trust Him, trust Him still;
Let all thy care be this—the doing of His will.

Thy hand in His, like fondest, happiest child
  Place thou, nor draw it for a moment thence;
Walk thou with Him, a Father reconciled,
  Till in His own good time He calls thee hence.
Walk with Him now: so shall thy way be bright,
And all thy soul be filled with His most glorious light.

Take courage, faint not, though the foe be strong;
  Christ is thy strength! He fighteth on thy side.
Swift be thy race; remember 'tis not long,
  The goal is near; the prize He will provide.
And then from earthly toil thou restest ever,
Never again to toil, or fight, or fear—oh, never!

He comes with His reward; 'tis just at hand!
  He comes in glory to His promised Throne!
My soul, rejoice! ere long thy feet shall stand
  Within the City of the blessed One—
Thy perils past, thy heritage secure,
Thy tears all wiped away, thy joy forever sure!
—Z. '12:68.

The Burning Bush

Exodus 3:1-14.

OUR LESSON opens, showing Moses at eighty years of age shepherding his flock on the rearward side of Mount Horeb, called Mount Sinai, where subsequently the law was given. As Moses looked, behold a bush burned near him, supposedly a thorn-bush, which sometimes grows to quite a height and quite a thickness in that country, and is known as shittim wood—the kind of wood used in the construction of the Tabernacle. As Moses looked at the flame he perceived that the bush vas not consumed, and considering this a most renarkable phenomenon he turned aside and drew ear to it to observe the matter. It was then that he Lord spoke to him from the midst of the burning ush, and Moses at once knew that what he had vitnessed was a miracle by which the Lord would ttract his attention with a view to communicating ome important lesson.

God usually has a symbolical meaning in every niracle, and in this one the representation is supposed to be Israel in the midst of tribulation, yet not onsumed. . . . And is not the burning bush a ood illustration of the experience of Christ and all f his members? Are they not indeed surrounded by fiery trials? and do they not emerge from these unscathed, uninjured?—on the contrary, blessed, developed, strengthened, made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light?

Well do the Scriptures declare that the fear, reverence, of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. We greatly deplore the growth of irreverence in our day, and urge upon all of our readers for themselves and for their families the cultivation of this proper attitude of mind, so helpful to our preparation for the life that now is and that which is to come. Liberty and independence, while excellent qualities, are always to be valued and conserved and protected, are never to become license, never to lead in any degree to irreverence. This is the more necessary to us for two reasons: (1) Because of the growing irreverence of the world about us, born of a declining faith in God and everything supernatural; (2) because of our growing enlightenment in the Truth, by which we see that the fears of an eternity of torture were groundless, there is a danger of losing that proper reverence for God which belongs to and is an integral part of love.

The Prophet David writes, "Keep thy foot when thou goest into the house of God"—take heed to your standing, take heed to your walk, take heed to your conduct. Whether the house of God be a great temple, as in past times, under divine direction, or whether it be the temple of God, which is the Church of Christ in the flesh, we should realize that reverence is befitting to us in connection with everything that is holy and consecrated. We should realize that whoever neglects the cultivation of reverence in respect to these matters is making his own pathway slippery and dangerous. He who reverences little and is careless is much more likely to stumble, to fall, and be utterly cast down. If even Moses, the "meekest man in all the earth," needed from the Lord as his first instruction a lesson of humility, shall we not suppose that such a lesson is necessary to us? Yea, verily!

Let us honor the Lord in our hearts, in our outward demeanor. Whether we bow to give thanks for our daily bread, whether we bow our knee night and morning in acknowledgment of divine care and providences, or whether we meet with those of like precious faith, let us see to it that reverence marks our conduct and our words as well as rules in our hearts. Let us, too, take off our shoes, let us lay aside the ordinary conduct of life by which we are in contact with the world, and in all our ways acknowledge him, especially when we hearken to his voice in the study of his Word as his people.

"Seen Their Affliction"—"Heard Their Cry"—"Know Their Sorrows"

With these words the Lord informed Moses briefly that he had not been negligent of the interests of Israel. By these words he allows him to understand that not until this time had the appropriate moment come for interference on behalf of Israel. And this thought of the divine knowledge, sympathy and care, and waiting for a due time, would give Moses all the more confidence in the Lord's ability to do according to his own good purposes when his time had come. And so it is with us: If we look back over the 1,800 years and more of this Gospel dispensation, and perceive how the Lord's cause has been permitted to be overwhelmed by the forces of evil during the "dark ages" and even yet, we stand amazed, and might be inclined to say, "Does God not know? does God not care? that he allows his own name to be dishonored and his Truth to be trampled under foot and his faithful people to suffer?"

The Lord assures us, too, that he knows all about these matters and is very sympathetic, far more so than we, and he is both able and willing to grant the deliverance needed at the appropriate time. What confidence it gives us now when we look back and behold that Spiritual Israel has been preserved through all these centuries! that notwithstanding the fiery affliction and adversity that burned against them, they have not been consumed! . . .

Whenever the Lord sends us on any special mission, we may be sure that he does not wish us to undertake it as our own mission, nor to claim the honor of the success attending it. He merely deigns to use us as his instrumentalities, whereas he could do the entire work much easier, we might say, without us. How wonderful it seems that God throughout all his dealings, past and present, has been willing to use his consecrated people. Telling them on the one hand that they are unworthy, he assures them on the other hand of his willingness to use their imperfections and to overrule and guide in respect to their services for him and his cause.

The prime essentials evidently in the faithful performance of such a commission would be reverence for the Lord and humility as respects our own talents and abilities. It was so with Moses, the "meekest man in all the earth." Not stopping even to tell the Lord of his appreciation of the facts that he had been chosen for and had undertaken this great work, Moses was overwhelmed with the thought that the Lord would deign to use him as a messenger, and he promptly disclaimed any special qualifications therefor. *Indeed, he evidently felt, as well as said, that there were others much more capable of the work than himself.* But was it not this very appreciation of his own unworthiness that helped to make him suitable for the Lord's business? And so with us: we may be sure that when we feel strong then we are weak, and when we feel weak in our own strength then we are best prepared to be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might and to be used of him as his instruments. It was so with the great Apostle; it must be so, we believe, with all whom the Lord will deign to use and acknowledge in any part of his service.—Z. '07: 141, 142.

Conduct

Decorum in the House of God

as best our part

"Keep thy foot when thou goest to the House of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil."—Ecclesiastes 5:1.

Solomon

THE WISE MAN was undoubtedly not talking about literal feet or literal steps, but giving some wise counsel, which his hearers might appropriate, just as we do. They understood him to mean that they must be circumspect in their daily lives.

"Keep thy foot." Notice where you are going. Do not go to the House of God as you would go to the market-place or to some place of amusement. Go as to the place where God will meet with His people. The wise man goes on to assume what would be heard in the House of God. Be not ready **"to give the sacrifice of fools."** This would seem to refer to laughter, levity, foolish talk and jesting.

This Scripture is one which may very properly be taken to heart by all of God's people at the present time. Reverence is very becoming. We have lost the fear that God will cast us into eternal torment. We know our Heavenly Father better than to suppose that He would have any such evil intention toward any of His creatures. But we should not go to the House of God as we would go to the market-place. Many of the Lord's people do not appreciate the fact that decorum is necessary in every place where God is worshiped.

Reverential Conduct To Be Cultivated

It is for us to realize that we have God in the Church today in a sense that He never was in the typical temple. Wherever there is a meeting of the members of the Church, the Lord has declared that He will be there. The living stones constituting the Temple of God should be as fully reverenced as temples made of literal stones.

Whether we meet in a parlor or in a church or in an opera house, the fact that God's people are there, makes that building, whatever it may be, a holy place. Therefore whoever approaches it should do so with a watchfulness of his feet. When he arrives, he should be appreciative of the place where he is, and should be ready to "hear"—listen—not full of mirth. All conversation should be of a kind that would edify—build up—along spiritual lines. If we cannot talk along such lines, it would be better for us to hear the discourse, join in the singing, and then withdraw.

Whatever conversation be carried on, it should be with reverence, not merely for the place, but for the occasion. There should be no turning about and saying, "Here comes Brother So-and-so, Sister So-and-so. We shall hear them sing." Such conduct is very improper.

We do not know any lesson the Lord's people need to learn more than that of **reverence**. The Lord will not **call** any one devoid of reverence, and He wants that quality to **grow strong**. But when fear is banished, the tendency is to **less reverence**. Special care in this respect is to be observed when we go to the House of God, or to any place where Divine service is to be held.

Consideration of the Rights of Others

Not only should we watch our **feet** in going to the House of God, but we should watch what we take with us. We should see that we go there clean; that we take no vermin in our clothing; that we have no bad odors about us. We should also see that we do not take children who are not properly trained. Thus we shall not be in danger of annoying others.

There may be occasions when children may be left alone at home. When this is impossible, it would be better for the parents to take turns in coming to the meetings. No one has a right to take children to the meeting, when their presence would be detrimental to the spiritual interests of others. We believe, however, that a way could be devised whereby the child could be left at home until of such an age as not to disturb the Class. The majority of parents become so accustomed to the ways of their children that they do not realize that others are being annoyed—when probably every motion of the child is disturbing others. The others have their own trials to tax their patience.

Punctuality a Mark of Character Development

It would seem that some need to watch, not only their feet, but also their **watches**. To come into the meeting late is out of harmony with the principles of both justice and love. All who attend ought, in justice to others, to see that they arrive in time. They ought so to arrange their affairs that they can be at the meeting promptly at the hour.

Doubtless the Lord would view our efforts to be punctual and not to annoy others as marks of Christian character-development, which would have His approval, and which would help to prepare us for the Kingdom. He who is indifferent to the rights of others manifests that he is lacking in the spirit of love, the spirit of Christ. And whoever has not the spirit of Christ, well developed, will not have a place in the Kingdom.

Hence these matters—unruly children, tardiness at meeting, etc., will have to do with our fitness for a place in the Kingdom. By this we do not mean that we are being judged according to our work, or that we have any right to judge others according to their work. The Lord said, "Judge not." We should show that our **endeavors to do the Lord's will** are equal to the **desires of our hearts**. If we exercise determination in trying to live up to these, we shall be glad when we experience our change in the Resurrection.—Z. '13: 58, 59.

Careless Living a Form of Profanity

"Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain."
—Exodus 20:7.

THIS command was not given to the Gentiles; for the Lord had no dealings with the world. It was given to the Jewish people, who had come into relationship with God through the Law Covenant. We have every reason to believe that many of the Jews tried very hard **outwardly** to keep the Ten Commandments, the **keeping** of which meant **life**, the **failure** to keep which meant **death**. All of their endeavors failed, and they continued to die.—Romans 7:10.

Notwithstanding the endeavor of many to observe this command of our text, St. Paul declared respecting them that the name of God was blasphemed **through them** amongst the Gentiles. (Romans 2:24.) We cannot suppose that the grosser meaning of blasphemy was the Apostle's thought. Blasphemy was a terrible thing among the Jews. Even a **parent** who heard his **own child** blaspheme was instructed to **stone** that child to **death** for so doing. We suppose the Apostle meant that the kind of living practised among the Jews really blasphemed God's name before the world.

They were professedly **God's** people. And if under Divine instruction, Divine care, and Divine recognition, they did the things dishonoring to God, they were blaspheming His name.

While the Ten Commandments were not given to the Church, yet every feature of the Ten Commandments is a command; for by the character of our consecration we are bound to seek to know God's will, even beyond the mere **letter** of His Word. Hence, while the Church is **not under** the Law Covenant, we are under the general instruction of the Ten Commandments. Therefore the Apostle says that "the **righteousness** of the Law [the **true meaning** of the Law] is fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."—Romans 8:4.

It is not supposable that any real child of God, any consecrated follower of Christ, could have a desire to take the name of the Father in vain. Hence the **apparent** meaning of this command is not applicable to us; for since we have become His children, and have received His Spirit, it would be the farthest thing from us to wish to profane His name. But as the Jews profaned the name of the Lord by careless living amongst the Gentiles, so there is great danger of Christians profaning His name by careless living. And this is indicated in the Scriptures as being a danger. . . .

Let Us Take Not His Name in Vain

From this standpoint, all of God's people should be very much on guard that they do not take the name of the Lord in vain when they profess to be His people, His children—when they profess to be the followers of Jesus and call themselves Christians. It would be far better if many professed Christians did not take the name of Christian at all. The only ones who may properly take Christ's name are those who really become His disciples. The only condition under which any may become His disciple is to take up his cross and follow Him—give up his life, surrender his will.

Although this commandment was not given to Spiritual Israel, we can readily see how the **spirit** of it applies to us. We have taken the name of Christ as our name. We profess to be members of the Body of Christ. And the holy name of the Head belongs to all the members of His Body. The honored name of the Bridegroom belongs to His Espoused. What carefulness the thought of this should give us, and how appropriate it is that we should see to it that we have not taken that blessed name in vain; that we appreciate the honor, the dignity, the responsibility, of our position as His representatives and ambassadors in the world! Let us, therefore, walk circumspectly, taking earnest heed that we bring no dishonor to that hallowed name; but on the contrary, that we honor it in our every thought and word and deed.

"What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation [behavior] and godliness?" "As He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation [behavior]; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy."—2 Peter 3:11; 1 Peter 1:15, 16; Z. '14:55, 56.

Loving [illegible] worshiped

God's Comprehensive Law

GOD'S wisdom, love and justice decide on what is best, and that decision is his will or law. But, strictly speaking, only so much of God's will as he expresses to his creatures is **law to them.** Hence, while his laws never conflict, they may be more or less fully expressed on one occasion than on another.

All of God's intelligent creatures are under instruction, being taught those laws which his infinite love, wisdom and justice have enacted for the well-being of all. Though created perfect, each in his plane of being, yet they all lack that scope of knowledge and wisdom which belongs in full measure to the divine nature only. They all lack experience; hence, in giving them instruction in the wisdom and propriety of his laws, it has pleased Jehovah to make an illustration which would manifest and practically exemplify his own character and prove to his creatures the wisdom and righteousness of his laws.

It is evident that the spirit of his law is not to take advantage of some transgressive slip, occasioned by lack of experience on the part of his creatures, but that he intends it to apply to the thoughts and intents of the hearts. That this is the real intent of God, we shall see illustrated by his dealings with those who have from lack of knowledge become sinners.

His law in full, as we now see it in the light of his Word, is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, mind, soul and strength," and "thy neighbor as thyself;" and the penalty attached to the slightest deviation from that law is, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die;"—that no being shall be permitted to live, who, when fully informed of God's righteous will, and enabled to obey it, shall not conform thereto; that all such be cut off from life. But this is as it may be seen **now.** Once it was not so clearly expressed, nor so clearly seen.

To fully exemplify this law, God caused man to be used as an illustration before this extreme penalty was placed upon the angels. So man was placed under the extreme penalty of his law—death; God knew that through inexperience man would violate that law and come under its penalty; but he purposed to make an **illustration** to all his creatures of the exceeding sinfulness of sin and its sure consequences, while at the same time his love and wisdom so marked out the plan, that mankind, the illustration, might not suffer loss, but be blessed by the lesson as learned.

Nor should we forget that God's dealing with man was perfectly just. He had a right to demand perfect obedience from a perfect creature; and the fact that he at first did not inflict death upon the angels was a favor toward them: even as toward man he has displayed his favor also, though in a different manner—through a ransom, and Savior, and restitution, and future trial for life, more favorable than the first, because of the knowledge of sin and its effects, meanwhile acquired by experience. This was a masterly stroke of wise economy on God's part; for had the death penalty been pronounced on the angels who sinned, a redeemer of their own kind would have been necessary for their recovery; and not only one, but many—one redeemer for each transgressor; for they were legion and were individually on trial; and the requirement of God's law is, Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, life for life.

Let us briefly view the exhibition of God's character as displayed in his dealing toward mankind whom he made a spectacle to angels. (1 Cor. 4:9.) In so doing, let us guard against the common error which judges of God's actions exactly as of our own. Let us remember that justice, love, wisdom and power, as commonly displayed by the fallen race, in dealing with each other, and by human parents with their children, are far from perfect. In our first parents those qualities were perfect: they were in the image of Jehovah; but in our experience, in consequence of the fall, these qualities are constantly at war with each other. Sometimes love has a victory over justice, and sometimes justice has a victory over love.

But with Jehovah there can be no conflict; and neither ever gains a victory or ascendancy over the other. Both are perfect, and work only in perfect harmony.

Before man was created, the Justice, Wisdom, Love and Power of God held conference on the subject, and devised the plan which has since then been developing. The plan was suggested by Wisdom and concurred in by the other attributes; the arrangement and execution of it being left in Wisdom's hands.

Wisdom designed to have the largest returns from the experience of man, and the most valuable illustration of God's character to all his creatures, on every plane of being. Accordingly Wisdom said, Let the man come under the control of Justice, Love and Power, **separately,** that the force and operation of each may be the more forcibly illustrated. Let Justice first have complete control, let men be dealt with by the strict law, "Thou shalt not"—. "In the day that thou dost . . . dying thou shalt die." And it was so.

Man, inexperienced and unused to self-control and liberty, violated the law, and experienced the full weight of Justice, as Wisdom had foreseen and prepared for.

The lesson under Justice has been long and severe, but the lesson must be thorough, so that it shall never need repeating. Men and angels must learn that Justice is relentless, irrevocable and unalterable. Then, too, before it could be realized that the remedy for man lay only in Jehovah and nowhere else, an opportunity was offered for the trial of other methods for man's recovery. First, the angels were given rulership (during the age before the flood), and made a miserable failure: for, while man became more and more corrupt himself, his evil influence led to the fall of some of those who attempted his assistance—"those angels which kept not their first estate."

With the deluge that order of affairs passed away. Then, under the Law Covenant, given to one selected nation, another and different opportunity was presented, to prove to man that even if God should cancel all enmity, or resentment, and receive the world into covenant relations, they would require a Restorer, so that they could continue in harmony with God, even after being forgiven. Hence sacrifices and offerings for sin were instituted, and God treated that nation as though original sin and guilt had been removed, and then placed them under laws to prove **to them,** to us and to all, their inability (as degenerate creatures) to keep his law without a restitution to perfection—to his likeness.

Meanwhile Love stood ready to manifest itself at the moment Wisdom should give the word. Love would have done so at once, but for two reasons: First, it could not oppose or interfere with the action of Justice in condemning man and delivering him over for the execution of the prescribed penalty. Second: though Love might have acknowledged Justice and approved its action by promptly providing a ransom (an equivalent price), Wisdom objected and did not permit this course at **that time,** because it saw best to make the lesson complete and thorough.

Hence for over four thousand years Love was not permitted to manifest itself, and might only speak in shadowy sacrifices and ceremonies, and more or less obscure promises. But, finally, when the right time had come, "in due time," "in the fulness of time," Wisdom gave the word, and Love began to manifest itself for man's relief. The first act was to produce a perfect and sinless man to be a suitable "ransom for all:" one not under the Adamic curse—who would lay down his life for the race, and whose sacrifice would meet all the requirements of Justice, and therefore be acceptable as a ransom and propitiation for man's sins. And Love's great exhibition was seen in the gift of the grandest and greatest and first of all God's creation, who stooped and became man, to redeem men: and "they called his name Jesus."

"Ah!" says one who judges by his own feelings, "Now comes Love's victory over Justice. We shall see that God is more loving than severe."

But not so; God is not more loving than severely just: he is perfect in both respects. It will be indeed a victory for Love, but not over Justice. It will be much grander than that. It will prove a victory for both Justice and Love; for it will be gained by Love's **paying the price** demanded by Justice—a **ransom,** "an equivalent price." (1 Tim. 2:4-6.) The love of God, so long veiled from sight, was manifested in the gift of his Son to be our Redeemer and Savior. The record is: "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation [satisfaction or appeasement] for our sins." **"In this was manifested the love of**

God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him."

When Love had ransomed man, and was ready to reveal itself by restoring the willing and obedient of mankind to perfection and harmony with God, Wisdom postponed this on the ground that a further development of the plan would ultimately enhance Love's glory, and perfect the work: that an interlude (the Gospel age) must occur in which should be selected some from among the redeemed, some sharers in Christ's sufferings and reproach, who should be counted worthy to share his glory and to be his associates in the execution of Love's triumph in "the restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets."

Long and faithfully has Love labored; but all her labor will yet be lost, unless in due time Wisdom shall commission Power to do its special part in the great plan.

Power thus far has stood in the background, doing nothing directly in man's relief, save in the resurrection of our Lord, and in the miracles which shadowed forth its coming work.

Now, we are living in the day when Power begins to act, not in opposition to Justice, but in harmony with Wisdom, Justice and Love. Oh, blessed day! The Lamb that was slain and who redeemed us by his blood is now invested with Power to bless all whom he bought; and he is now about taking unto himself his great power, and shall reign until he has subdued all enemies.—Rev. 20:6; 1 Cor. 15:25.

God has chosen the plan which most fully and grandly exemplifies his unalterable justice, and exhibits the exceeding riches of his grace—his love; and in the restoration of man ("all who come to the Father by him") from destruction, from death, to perfection and life, will God's power be illustrated far more forcibly than even in man's creation. And as men and angels come to recognize the full fruition of God's plan in the ages to come, will they not with one consent exclaim with our brother and Apostle Paul, as he caught a glimpse of it: "Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind [plan] of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? . . . Because out of him, and through him, and for him are all things. To him be the glory for ever."—Rom. 11:33-36.

The Diversified Wisdom of God

"The much diversified wisdom of God" (Eph. 3:10—Diaglott) pursued one course with reference to the angels, not delivering the latter over to justice under the extreme penalty of the law, but pronouncing a lesser penalty until they should learn of evil and its consequences from the "spectacle" furnished them in mankind.

But the result of Wisdom's course in either case is the same. The angels being perfect, and having had an example of the extreme penalty of the law, will be able to conform to God's law when again offered the opportunity, and doubtless many of them will be glad to do so. Man, who experienced the extreme penalty of the law, will also be able to appreciate forever good and evil, and, if he will, to choose that which is good, while both, in the event of non-conformity to God's will and a persistence in an evil course, will then be liable to the extreme penalty—the Second Death. Those counted worthy of everlasting life will then, as God does, love righteousness because it is good, and hate unrighteousness because it is evil.

Though the experience of angels might at first appear less severe than man's, yet when it is remembered that man's dying experience was limited to an average of three-score years and ten, while the angels who sinned experienced over four thousand years of living restraint under Satan's rule, it will generally be conceded that their experience was not less severe than man's.

In view of the great work to be accomplished, how necessary is the elevation of the Christ (Head and body) to the divine nature, since his mission is to govern, direct and bring to perfection "whosoever will," both of spiritual and human beings. And does not the selection of this class, made different from both angels and men—of the divine nature—illustrate yet further the much diversified wisdom of God, whereby he is able to work all things according to the counsel of his own will? Verily it does! —Z. '94:236-238.

"Truth is Stranger than Fiction"

(Continued from Old Corn Gems No. 82.)

ANOTHER chapter in our experience needs to be told, as it marks another shaking and sifting. Mr. A. D. Jones proposed to start a paper on the same line as the **Watch Tower**, to republish some of the simpler features of God's plan and to be a sort of missionary and primary teacher. Knowing him to be clear on the subject of the ransom, I bade him God speed and introduced a sample copy of his paper, **Zion's Day Star** (now for some years discontinued), to our nearly ten thousand readers—only, as it soon proved, to stumble some of them into rank infidelity and others into the rejection of the ransom; for though the **Day Star** for a few months steered a straight course and maintained the same position as the **Tower** with reference to the ransom, and for the same reason refused the no-ransom articles sent for its columns by Mr. Paton, yet within one year it had repudiated Christ's atoning sacrifice, and within another year it had gone boldly into infidelity and totally repudiated all the rest of the Bible as well as those portions which teach the fall in Adam and the ransom therefrom in Christ.

All this meant another strain, another sifting, another cutting loose of friends, who erroneously supposed that our criticisms of the false doctrines were prompted by a spirit of rivalry, and who did not so soon see whither his teachings were drifting, nor how great the importance of holding fast the first principles of the doctrines of Christ—how Christ died for our sins and rose again for our justification.

We want to put you all on notice that the shaking and sifting process, so far from being over and past, is bound to progress more and more until all have been tried and tested thoroughly. It is not a question of who may fall, but of "Who shall be able to stand?" as the Apostle puts it. And we have need again to remember the admonition, "Let him who thinketh he standeth [who feels very confident, as did Peter when he said 'Lord, though all forsake thee, yet will not I'] take heed lest he fall."

This doctrine of another way of salvation (and salvation for all, too) than by the cross of Christ, is not only the error which is, and has been since 1874, sifting all who come into the light of Present Truth, but it is the trial that is to come upon the whole of so-called Christendom to try them. (Rev. 3:10.) It is already spreading among all classes of Christian people, especially among ministers of all denominations. The number who believe that Christ's death paid our sin-penalty is daily getting smaller, and before very long there will be a regular stampede from the doctrine of man's fall in Adam and his ransom from that fall by "the man Christ Jesus." (1 Tim. 2:5,6.) As the Psalmist prophetically pictured it, a thousand will fall to one who will stand. —Psa. 91:7.

The time has come for each one to declare himself boldly. He who is not for the cross (the ransom) is against it! He that gathereth not scattereth abroad! He who is silent on this subject, when it is being assailed by foes on every hand, whether it be the silence of fear, or of shame, or of indifference, is not worthy of the truth, and will surely be one to stumble quickly. He who from any cause sits idly by, while the banner of the cross is assailed, is not a soldier of the cross worthy the name, and will not be reckoned among the overcomers who shall inherit all things. And God is permitting these very siftings, in order to sift out all who are not "overcomers," and to test and manifest the little flock, who, like Gideon's final army, will, though few, share the victory and honors of their Captain in glory.

Are you prepared for the issue, dear brethren and sisters? The armor of Truth has been given you for some time past; have you put it on? have you made it your shield and buckler? your defense against all the wily arts of the Evil One?

Do not be deceived by the agents Satan often makes use of. In this he will be as cunning as in his presentation of the deceptive misrepresentations of truth, making unwitting use of many a weaker brother, and to some extent of every stumbling and deceived one, to spread farther the infection of false doctrine. And while every child of God should take earnest heed, that he prove not an occasion of stumbling to any, we cannot doubt that every one, through some instrumentality, will be assailed.

Aptly indeed did the Prophet liken it to a pestilence. (Psa. 91:6.) A pestilence spreads because people are in a physical condition which renders them susceptible to disease. Physicians say that those whose systems are in good, healthy order are in little danger of any disease. So it is with a spiritual pestilence: it will flourish not only because all will be exposed to it who have not a clear intellectual appreciation of the doctrines of Christ, but from another cause also. Out of the heart are the issues of life, and most needful of all to be in right condition is the heart. How is your heart? Is it proud, boastful, independent, self-conscious and self-willed? If so, take care; you will be very liable to this epidemic, no matter how far from it you may seem to be. Pray for

"A heart resigned, submissive, meek,
The dear Redeemer's throne,
Where only Christ is heard to speak,
Where Jesus reigns alone."

With such a heart you are safe. In meekness and lowliness, you will never think of redeeming yourself from the condemnation that you inherited through Adam, by sacrificing present sinful desires, but you will flee to the cross, where God himself opened the fountain for sin and uncleanness, present as well as past.

Doth This Offend You?

We presume that this warning will offend some, though it is not designed to offend any. It is written for the defense of the meek against the sophistries of error. "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord [into the Kingdom offered]? or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands and a pure heart [who is diligently fashioning his life after the principles of holiness]; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity [who cultivates no earthly amibitions or pride, but patiently waits for the glory to follow the course of present self-sacrifice], nor sworn deceitfully [ignoring or despising his covenant with God]: He shall receive the blessing of the Lord [the Kingdom glory and joint-heirship with Christ], and righteousness [perfection—full deliverance from present infirmities, etc.] from the God of his salvation." (Psa. 24:3-5.) "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation"—that "your minds be not corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ."—Let all the meek fully awake to the trial of the hour; and while many are putting stumbling blocks in the way of the "feet" of the body of Christ, let each soldier of the cross be vigilant, not only to stand, but to assist others—bearing up the "feet."—Psa. 91:11, 12; Z. '06:236, 237.

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When we learn of the Divine promise, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My Throne," it gives us the thought that a great victory must be won to prove ourselves worthy of the great honor to which God has called His Church. And this victory, as we are happy to learn, is not always to the strong, but to those whom God will bless. —Z. '15:104.

For Children of Believers

Morning Prayer

Dear Father, hear a little child
  Who offers thanks to Thee;
Through all the darkness Thou hast kept
  A watch-care over me.
O Father, keep me through this day,
  I would to Thee belong;
May love control my little hands,
  May kindness rule my tongue.
Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done
  Upon this earth again;
Dear Father, hear my little prayer
  For Jesus' sake. Amen.

Evening Prayer

Dear Lord, before sweet slumber comes
  To close my weary eyes,
Up to Thy Throne of Heavenly grace
  My voice in prayer would rise.
For all the blessings of this day
  I give Thee thanks and praise.
Forgive me, Lord, for Jesus' sake,
  For all my naughty ways;
And as I lay me down to sleep
  Do Thou an angel send
To watch beside me all the night
  For Jesus' sake. Amen.—Z. '13:23.

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Every violation of conscience, whether the thing itself be right or wrong, is a step in the direction of wilful sin.—Z. '11:425.

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While the cross of the Lord is not a light one, nevertheless his yoke is easy and his burden is light because he yokes himself with us in our trials and difficulties of life. With him as our companion and burden-bearer the cross is light, the burden is easy and the joys and peace resulting to his faithful are indescribable.—Z. '06:173.

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As Saul of Tarsus, in receiving his blessing of the Lord, received also a thorn in the flesh, which buffeted him continually through the remainder of his experiences, but which he learned ultimately to appreciate as a channel of divine blessing, as a reminder of divine favor, so it was with Jacob. At the very time that he was wrestling with the angel and getting the blessing, he received a wound, a troublesome reminder of the blessing, which continued with him probably through the remainder of his days, causing him to limp. The record is that the angel touched him in the hollow of his thigh, probably touched the sciatic nerve, causing the sinew to shrink and a slight dislocation of the joint. The lesson not only was one for Jacob himself to the remainder of his days, leading him to remember his dependence upon the Lord, and that he owed everything he possessed to the divine blessing, but it served afterward with his posterity as a continual reminder of the same thing; for the record is that thenceforth the Israelites would not eat of this sinew from any animal. Jacob's "thorn in the flesh," no doubt, served to keep him humble, even as Paul's served to remind him that he was what he was by the grace of God, and not in any wise of himself. Similarly, the Lord permits certain weaknesses of the flesh to affect his spiritual children in the present time **favorably**. Undoubtedly some of our difficulties and trials, physical as well as others, are amongst our greatest blessings, working out for us a better portion in the future, by working in us faith, patience, true reliance upon the Lord.—Z. '01:271.

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TRIBULATION—THEN EXALTATION

Question.—Are the Lord's people more awkward than others, more quarrelsome, or more injurious to their neighbors that they should have tribulation; or why does the Lord say, "In the world ye shall have tribulation"?

Answer.—We believe the Lord's own answer to the question is that himself and all of his true followers would have tribulation in the world because "the darkness hateth the light." We do not mean that all but the saintly are vicious or unkind. We know that there are many well-intentioned people. The thought is that there would be such inharmony between God's people and those of the world that there would be continual disapprobation manifested by the worldly toward the saintly. Some of the world would **hate** righteousness while others would be so out of sympathy with the light that they would not give God's people the defense or assistance which they would otherwise be willing to give.

We think it quite true that those who are looking for the coming Kingdom must expect their peace, not from the worldly, but from another quarter. "In the world ye shall have tribulation." We also believe that part of our tribulation in the world is because we are being more and more transformed; hence we do not find the satisfaction in the world that we otherwise would and that others find. Our chief business is to keep our bodies under and restrain our natural appetites. The opposition of ourselves—the warring against our human nature and the misunderstandings of others—all these combine to make our tribulation in the world.—Z. '11:46.

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The Lord may lead in mysterious ways regarding our temporal matters and our service for Him and His cause. While He gives us assurances of His love and care and of the ultimate outcome of the narrow way to all who faithfully follow in the footsteps of Jesus, nevertheless He may meantime permit trials and difficulties of various kinds to come as storms upon us, threatening our very destruction, threatening the overwhelming of our spiritual life, darkening the sky of our hopes with the thunder-clouds of our enemies' threats and with Satan's roarings. Our duty is to let the eye of faith be undimmed by these various terrible conditions—to let our hearts be firmly fixed upon Him who has promised and who will perform.—Z. '16:285.

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MANY ILLUSTRATIONS OF OUR ONENESS

It is remarkable how fully the Lord has covered the whole range of illustration in describing the oneness subsisting between himself and his consecrated followers. He gives us an illustration from the mineral kingdom, saying that we are living stones built together upon him as the foundation and capstone, to be the Temple of our God. From the animal kingdom our Lord drew illustrations of this oneness, likening himself to the good Shepherd and his true followers to the sheep under his care, one with him in fellowship. From the vegetable kingdom he drew the illustration of this lesson—I am the Vine, of which my true disciples are the branches. From the family relationship he drew an illustration of the true husband and the true wife, and their complete, thorough union of heart and of every interest. From the family again he drew another illustration representing the Creator as the Father, himself as the elder Son and all of his followers as brethren. From the human body we have another illustration, Jesus himself being the Head over the Church, which is his body, for, as the Apostle declares, we are members in particular of the body of Christ. In proportion as our faith can grasp these declarations, in proportion as we can realize their truthfulness, in that same proportion we may have strong faith and confidence that he who has begun the good work in us is both able and willing to complete it. Whoever of a loyal, obedient heart can exercise faith has thus provided for himself strength and grace for every time of need, for every hour of trial, for every difficulty and perplexity and for all the affairs of life—the ballast which will give equilibrium and enable us to profit by all of life's experiences, the bitter as well as the sweet.—Z. '05:122.

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"When prayer delights thee least,
Then learn to say,
Now is the greatest need
That I should pray."—Z. '14:14.

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Let us not only see to it that we are as nearly as possible faultless and undeserving of reproaches and buffetings, but when these experiences come to us let us remember to take them patiently, uncomplainingly, and thus to more and more develop and exhibit the character-likeness of our Lord. Those who thus do, have the Lord's guarantee that every such experience shall prove a blessing in the end. Those who, on the contrary, undertake to "battle for their rights," show that they either do not understand the nature of the covenant they have made to take up the cross, or else that they are unwilling to comply with the terms of that covenant. —Z. '06:351.

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Our Heavenly Father's love and care and protection are His wings and His feathers, shielding us from all harm, keeping us warm and safe. He is able to make every experience in life work out for our good. We are, however, to remember that the promise that God will make all things work together for our good is a promise to the New Creature, not to the old creature. Oftentimes the interests of the New Creature and of the old creature are diverse. God has an interest in all that concerns us, but He overrules our temporal affairs for our best spiritual interests. If we were too prosperous, it might not be of advantage to us as New Creatures.

Our temporal affairs may be permitted to go awry. We are not wise enough to know what is for our own best interests as New Creatures, and what would help us the most in our fight against the world, the flesh and the Devil. We are, therefore, to flee to the Lord and accept whatever experiences may come, as those which will be best for us; and we are to seek to get the designed lessons of faith and obedience from them.—Z. '14:110.

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All we know of divine power and goodness either affects us favorably or unfavorably, to draw us nearer to the Lord or to separate us the more from him if we are not at heart disposed for righteousness but are controlled by envious or wicked motives.—Z. '05:95.

◆

The Apostle exhorts us to "forget the things which are behind, and to press forward to the things which are before." The lessons we learn from past experiences, even from adverse experiences, while they should be kept in memory, need not be mourned over by spiritual Israelites, for they can call to mind that the merit of Christ's sacrifice covers all of their unwilling blemishes and mistakes. Carrying with them their experiences they should press forward to fresh victories and fresh joys in the Lord.—Z. '05:314.

◆

Our exhortation to all who have forsaken all to follow the Lord is that we do not look back, that we estimate that we have made the grandest bargain imaginable, that we are in the way for obtaining the grandest prize imaginable, together with association with our Lord in his wonderful work and with the divine approval.—Z. '06:47.

◆

An indication of our harmony with the Lord would be in our increased appreciation of His Word, a deeper insight into its precious teachings.—Z. '11:343.

◆

When God has any special favors to bestow we may safely assume that they are not given out haphazard, but according to some partial conditions of faith or worthiness.—Z. '05:41.

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a. Winter

Old Corn Gems

NUMBER EIGHTY-FOUR

"And they did eat of the OLD CORN of the land on the morrow after the Passover . . . and the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the OLD CORN of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year." Joshua 5:11-12.

A SAFE RULE

"WHERE A BROTHER GIVES AN INTERPRETATION OF A SCRIPTURE WHICH DIFFERS FROM THAT GIVEN BY BROTHER RUSSELL, AND BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION SEEMS REASONABLE AND IN HARMONY WITH THE PLAN OF GOD, THEN WE BELIEVE IT A SAFE RULE TO FOLLOW BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION, FOR THE REASON THAT HE IS THE SERVANT OF THE CHURCH, SO CONSTITUTED BY THE LORD FOR THE LAODICEAN PERIOD; AND THEREFORE WE SHOULD EXPECT THE LORD TO TEACH US THROUGH HIM. WHERE THERE ARISES A DOUBT IN THE MIND AS TO WHICH INTERPRETATION IS CORRECT, THEN IT IS ALWAYS SAFER TO RESOLVE THAT DOUBT IN FAVOR OF BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION. WE BELIEVE SUCH TO BE IN HARMONY WITH THE LORD'S WILL." Z. '18:51.

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The Voices of the Three Signs

WHEN preparing the Sunday School lessons relating to Moses and his two presentations of himself to the Israelites, as their deliverer from Egyptian bondage, we noted the fact that "these things were written aforetime for our admonition upon whom the ends of the ages are come." (1 Cor. 10:11.) And, considering the matter from this standpoint, we perceived, as we had never done before, that the three signs by which the Israelites were convinced that God's deliverance of them was at hand, at Moses' second presentation, must have been intended to typify some corresponding three signs or testimonies at the second advent of Christ: testimonies which will be convincing to the true Spiritual Israelites. In the type these three signs or testimonies preceded the plagues upon the Egyptians: and this in the antitype must mean that the three signs or testimonies to Spiritual Israel respecting the second advent of our Lord and respecting the great deliverance which he is to accomplish, must precede the plagues, the great time of trouble, coming upon the world in general shortly.

At first we were perplexed, and said to ourself: "The Scriptures clearly show us that we are now 'in the days of the Son of Man;' . . . yet where are these three signs? Already thirty-four years of the forty-year harvest are in the past, and but seven remain, in the last of which we confidently expect the plagues upon the world—antitypical Egypt. Where are these signs or testimonies, which the type teaches us we should expect at this time, to convince all the true Israelites?"

For a time we were inclined to look for miraculous tokens, but subsequently realized that this would be out of the Lord's order, as the antitype is always on a higher and grander scale than the type: as for instance the typical Passover lamb but feebly foreshadowed the Lamb of God, and the great things accomplished through his sacrifice. Feeling confident of the times in which we are living, "in the parousia of the Son of Man," we concluded that in all probability these signs had already been given, or were in process of giving at the present time. Still we could not recognize them, and, feeling that the matter must now be to the Lord's household "meat in due season," we besought the Lord earnestly and repeatedly for light upon the subject, while continuing our studies. No light coming, we mentioned the matter to the Bible House family at the dinner table, requesting the prayers of all upon the subject, and that if any had suggestions to offer they should feel free to present them. Seemingly it was in line with the divine purpose that we should thus come to the point of making confession of inability to solve the riddle, and that our reliance for wisdom was wholly upon the Lord: for within two hours after this acknowledgment the entire matter became clear and lucid to our mind, as we shall endeavor now to lay it before you all.

(1) Our Lord declares Moses to have been, in some particulars, in some of his transactions, a type of himself, saying, "Moses wrote of me." Moses himself declared, "A prophet [teacher] shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren like unto me." Peter quotes this last expression in his sermon, and emphasizes it. (John 5:46; Deut. 18:15; Acts 3:22.) Moses did not typify Christ in all of his doings, however, nor was his life as a whole a type of the life of Christ. For instance, in his smiting of the rock, contrary to the divine command, he became a type of those of Christ's followers who put him to an open shame, and who, in consequence, will die the Second Death; and as a type of these Moses was not permitted to enter into the land of promise. (Num. 20:11; Deut. 32:51, 52; Heb. 10:29.) He typified Jehovah at times also; but in the present instance we are specially interested in considering his conduct with the Israelites in connection with their deliverance from the bondage of Egypt. In this type we see him distinctly as a representative of Christ Jesus. Moses was rich, a prince in high honor, learned in all the learning of his times, but for Israel's sake he renounced these, left them all, and they being bondmen, he took his place amongst them, to be their leader and deliverer. How like this is to the description given us in the Scriptures of our Lord's course! He left the glory of the heavenly condition and spiritual plane of being; he took a bondman's form and was found in fashion as a man. He came to deliver his brethren from bondage.—Phil. 2:6-8, Diaglott.

When Moses came to his own people they rejected him, and he fled for his life to the land of Midian, from whence he came to them a second time. So Christ came to his own, and his own received him not (John 1:12); and he went into a far country, even heaven itself, from whence he has now, a second time, come, and will deliver all who are true Israelites indeed from the bondage of sin and death. Moses was forty years in coming to the point where he offered himself to Israel the first time; then he was absent from them an equal period of time, forty years, and came again and delivered them. There is a type or parallel in this time feature also; it illustrates the length of the Jewish and the Gospel ages, as being equal. From the time of the beginning of typical Israel as a nation, waiting for the coming of Messiah, down to the time when Jesus actually presented himself, was a period of 1,845 years, and from that time, when he died and left them, until the period which the Scriptures show us marked his second coming (October, 1874) was a like period of 1845 years,—corresponding exactly to the two periods at which Moses offered himself in the type.—Vol. 2, Chap. 7.)

The Voice of the First Sign

(2) At Moses' second presentation to Israel he did not address them personally and directly, as at the first, God having said to him, "Aaron shall be thy prophet or mouthpiece, and thou shalt be a god unto Aaron." This item of the type would seem to imply just what we see to be the fact of the case

now, viz., that the Lord Jesus does not address himself to the true Israelites in person now, as at the first advent, but through his agent, through a mouthpiece. Aaron, the mouth-piece or agent of the Lord, we would understand to represent the Royal Priesthood—those of the Lord's consecrated people still in the flesh, still sacrificing,—who have not yet passed beyond the vail into glory (in reality Brother Russell himself was the antitypical Aaron. See O.C.G. 62:14, K. 6.) The type, then, seems to say that the signs or testimonies which will convince all true Israelites now living respecting the presence of the Lord and his mighty power to deliver, his ultimate victory over Satan, sin and death will be of or from our **present** Lord, but by or through the living members of his Body, his brethren, represented in Aaron.

(3) The first sign or testimony to Israel was the casting of the rod upon the ground, and its becoming a serpent, and the taking of the serpent by the tail, and its becoming a rod again in the hands of Aaron. It was Moses' rod, and Aaron was merely his representative in every act. The Natural Israelite merely saw this as a miracle, and discerned in it no teaching; but the Spiritual Israelite is not to expect a larger rod and a larger serpent as the antitype, but should expect to comprehend the meaning of the rod and of the serpent as an antitypical instruction or testimony today.

A rod symbolizes authority. Moses' rod was frequently used in connection with the plagues, as well as in connection with the signs, as signifying divine authority. A serpent is a symbol of evil—of sin and all its consequences, evil in general. The lesson for the Spiritual Israelite today is that he is now to understand that all the evil there is in the world is the result, directly or indirectly, of God's having let go of his rod or authority; and they are to understand further that it is God's intention or purpose, as it is also his promise, to take hold upon the present evil conditions, which have lasted now more than six thousand years, and to bring order out of confusion—to re-establish his authority in his own hand.

These acts or signs are said to have "voices" or to be **testimonies.** (Exod. 4:8, 9.) Hence our query must be, Is this sign or testimony now being given to God's people throughout the world? We answer, Yes. Has it been always recognized and presented thus? We answer, No. Was it ever thus presented before the harvest time? We answer, No. Heretofore it has been a matter of speculation amongst peoples and theologians of all classes and shades of Christian belief, but a question without an answer —Why did God permit evil in the world? Some have blasphemously held that God has **caused** the evil, that good might follow; but this God himself most emphatically denies, and everything pertaining to his character refutes it. He declares that every good and every perfect gift is of him, with whom is no changeableness or variableness. "His work is perfect." Others have claimed that a conflict is in operation between God and Satan, between good and evil, and that each side is doing its utmost to conquer the other—with evil and Satan predominant in the world, on account of which it is spoken of as "the present evil world," in which there is "none righteous, no, not one." But whatever the standpoint of view, it has been confusion only until the harvest-time, when the true light upon the subject began to shine forth, showing that when sin entered the world God gave mankind over, let them take their course, let the rod of divine authority drop, "rested from his own work," permitting sin and evil to flourish—not, however, intending that it should flourish forever as a serpent, but fully intending, predestinating, and even foretelling, that in due time he would set up his Kingdom in the person of the Messiah, who should lay hold upon that old serpent, the devil and Satan, and restrain his power. Showing, too, that he will ultimately bring all evil conditions back to subjection and harmony with the divine authority and law—destroying the evil connected therewith. This teaching, then, is the sign whose **"voice"** or **testimony** was typified by Aaron casting the rod upon the ground, its becoming **a** serpent, and his taking it back into his hand again. How much grander the antitypical teaching than the typical sign! How much more forceful! Who of the true Israelites who has heard this testimony is any longer in doubt respecting the speedy deliverance of all of God's people from the power of Satan, sin and death?

We would avoid personality as far as possible, but believe it to be in the interest of the Truth and of the true Israelites that we point out that this sign has already been given. **Zion's Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence** was founded in 1879, and the "voice" therefrom, to the true Israel of God, announced that the second advent of our Lord, as the deliverer of the world, had already taken place—that he was **present** but invisible, a spirit being not possible to be seen by any, even his Church, until they should be "changed" and made **like him** in the First Resurrection. The message further declared that he was present for the purpose of establishing his Kingdom and delivering his saints and the whole groaning creation from the bondage of corruption—as many as will obey him. And it is very remarkable that very shortly a special number of this journal was issued, bearing the significant title, **"Food for Thinking Christians—Why Evil Was Permitted."** This voice or testimony was spread abroad amongst the Spiritual Israelites in an extraordinary manner —over a million and a half copies being circulated through the mails and at Church doors in the United States, Canada and Great Britain. And the voice or testimony of this first sign, token, teaching, is still being repeated from one to another of the Lord's people throughout the world, and now in various languages. In that pamphlet for the first time, so far as we know, was shown that the evil in the world, the bondage to sin and death and the reign of iniquity and the various oppressions to which the whole groaning creation is subject, are the results of God's having **let go his authority** (rod), and not the result of his **inability** to hold the authority, nor in any sense the outworking of the **authority in his hand.** It showed also how complete will be the restraint of evil and its complete annihilation when again the Lord shall take unto himself his great power and reign. Could there possibly be a greater or a grander antitype for the sign which Moses and Aaron presented to Israel through the rod and the serpent? Is not the truth on this subject much more convincing to the Spiritual Israelite today than any natural signs or wonders or miracles could possibly be? Does not the knowledge now granted the Lord's people respecting the divine plan of the ages, and its purpose, and the result, satisfy our longings as nothing else could do, and assure our hearts that deliverance is nigh?

The Voice of the Second Sign

(4) The second sign to be given to the Israelites was that of the leprous hand. Hidden in the bosom, when revealed it was leprous; but when hidden again, and revealed a second time, it was whole. Again, we say that the Natural Israelite discerned nothing but the natural sign, but it was intended of God that the Spiritual Israelite should discern a much grander lesson, and that a testimony through this grander lesson would be still more convincing to him than was the typical sign to the typical Israelite. A hand is a symbol of power. In this case the hand represented divine power. Leprosy is a symbol of sin. The teaching, therefore, would seem to be that divine power was first manifested without sin or imperfection or blemish; secondly, that the same divine power, hidden for a time, was afterward manifest in sin and imperfection; and thirdly, that the same divine power, hidden again for a time, will subsequently be manifest without sin.

What teaching or testimony is this? We answer that it is in harmony with the previous teaching respecting the permission of evil, but does not apply to evil in general, but rather to sin in particular; does not apply to the world in general, but specially applies to the people of God—to those whom God uses as his agents or representatives, his **hand**, his **power** in the world. God's power originally was manifested unblemished. But during this Gospel Age he has been represented by his consecrated people, the members of the Body of Christ, who are his ambassadors and representatives; but they are leprous, actually imperfect, though reckonedly perfect in Christ. As the world sees them they are blemished, but from the divine standpoint their blemishes are all hidden, covered with the merit of Christ's righteousness. Nevertheless, these have been the **hand** or **power** of God in the world for more than eighteen centuries; but by and by they are to be received into his bosom, and "changed" in the First Resurrection, so that when manifest again in the future they will be without sin, "without spot or wrinkle or any such thing," and will again be used of the Lord as his agent in stretching forth his rod and bringing the plagues upon Egypt, and delivering the residue of God's people from the bondage of sin and death.

And is this also a sign or a testimony peculiar to this time in which we live, and was this subject never clearly seen before? We answer, it is peculiar to our day, and was never clearly seen before. In the past many have seen something of justification, something of sanctification, something of a coming deliverer; but never before have these subjects been seen in the clear light in which they are now seen as related to each other. Never before was the relationship distinctly seen between justification and sanctification and deliverance; that justification is of divine grace, accepted through faith; that sanctification implies works and sacrifice, based upon justification; and that to these justified and consecrated ones who faithfully overcome, by the grace of God in Christ, shall be granted a share in the "glory, honor and immortality" of the divine nature in the First Resurrection.

But has the voice or sign of this testimony gone forth in any particular channel, as did the preceding voice or testimony? We answer, Yes: in the **Millennial Dawn** series of volumes, the first of which was published in 1886. The united testimony of these relates to the Church, showing original sin, the first step out of it into justification through faith in Christ, the second step of sanctification and sacrifice, and the ultimate change in the First Resurrection to the divine nature and glory and joint-heirship. These volumes deal specially with this subject from its various standpoints, the ransom-sacrifice of our Lord, on account of which the cleansing will come to us in due time, being everywhere prominently set forth; and also the fact that no absolute purity is to be expected until the Lord shall take us to himself in our "change."

Supplemental to the teaching of the **Dawns** on this subject, and to assist in emphasizing their "voice" and making clear their testimony, the Pilgrim service has been instituted under which various brethren travel from place to place explaining and demonstrating the lesson taught by the leprous hand and its healing, and all of our readers, having heard the testimony, are daily giving it forth to others.

The Voice of the Third Sign

(5) Another sign was to be given, the Lord clearly intimating that it would be necessary, and that all of his true people would not hear or heed the "voice" of the first two testimonies. To Natural Israel the third sign was the taking of the water from the river and pouring it upon the earth, where it became blood. They saw merely the sign, the miracle; they read not its meaning, as the Spiritual Israelite must seek to do. In explanation of the symbolical teaching of this type we suggest that **water** is here, as elsewhere, a symbol of the **Truth**; and that the **earth** is here, as elsewhere, a symbol of **society**.* The pouring of the water upon the earth would ordinarily mean the refreshment of the earth, a blessing; and the pouring of the Truth upon society would ordinarily be expected to mean a blessing to society; but in the symbol the water turned to blood, repulsive, abhorrent, symbolizing death; and this, in the antitype, would signify that in the present time the pouring out of the Truth upon society will produce an effect contrary to what might ordinarily have been expected. Society, civilization, has been claiming, especially within the past century, to be searching high and low for the Truth. But this type says that the time has come when these professed truth-seekers (the word science signifies truth) will reject the truth, disdain it, and to them it will seem obnoxious, loathsome, intolerable. Our readers will here possibly call to mind our Lord's words respecting this present time, "The sun shall be darkened and the moon shall be turned into **blood.**" We have elsewhere shown the significance of this: ** that the moon is the symbol of the Jewish

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* Millennial Dawn, Vol. I., pp. 66-71.

** Millennial Dawn, Vol. IV., pp. 590-594.

Law, as the sun is the symbol of the Gospel message; and that the Gospel message will become darkness to the eyes of society in general through the sophistries of Higher Criticism, Evolution theories, etc., of this boastful day; while the Law, represented by the moon, will be viewed as bloody—that its sacrifices will not be esteemed as types nor appreciated as such, but be regarded as the work of misguided Jews, who slaughtered their animals by the thousands because of their ignorance and superstition, and that the commands which they obeyed were not of God, but of their own conjecture and of priestly connivance. The same thought attaches to this sign or testimony of the water of Truth being poured upon the social earth. It will be resented as bloody instead of being absorbed as Truth.

Is there anything corresponding to this sign that could be esteemed a sign or testimony to the True Israelites, such as never was before given? We answer, Yes, there is. A very remarkable movement has been in progress . . . during which the **Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society** has supplied tracts free in any quantity to those who would promise to use them judiciously. You have the annual reports showing the millions of pages which have thus been circulated—the Truth being thus poured upon the symbolical earth, society, liberally in many lands and in many languages. . . . Hundreds of the Lord's consecrated people have systematically, season after season, distributed to Christian people tracts and booklets supplied freely—the donations covering the expense coming in without urging or even request.

But what is the effect of this pouring out of the water upon the most enlightened peoples of the world, professed truth-seekers? Is it gladly received, joyfully absorbed? Only by the few—the vast majority seem to be angered, as the Scribes and Pharisees and doctors of divinity at the first advent were angered when they perceived that the Lord and the apostles were teaching the people, and that without money and without price. (Acts 4:2.) Nothing can be more evident than that the professed teachers of Christendom do not want to be taught themselves and do not want their people to be taught the Truth. They bitterly oppose it and persecute and speak evil of those who in this way are seeking to do good. More and more they are getting so changed from the simplicity of the Gospel of Christ to the theory of Evolution and Higher Criticism and sectarian pride and worldliness that the Truth seems repulsive to them, undesirable, bloody. They not only view the typical sacrifices as bloody, but they resent the thought that the antitypical sacrifice for sins was the death of Christ—they resent the thought that divine justice required this sacrifice, and that "without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins," as the Apostle declared. (Heb. 9:22.) It does not fit with their theories. According to their theories man was created next to the monkey, and has been evolving as a race grandly up to the present time, and will continue to evolve and develop until he becomes a god, and hence needs only to be let alone, needs no Savior, no deliverer from the present condition of things, which is not seen to be evil. They put evil for good and good for evil, darkness for light and light for darkness. To these the truth of God's Word respecting the fall, respecting the ransom, respecting the coming deliverance and restitution blessings which God has provided in Christ, through the Millennial Kingdom, for all the families of the earth—these are all objectionable, contradictory to their theories, hateful, bloody.

As the "voice" of the third sign or testimony was to bring conviction to all of the true typical Israelites, so in the antitype this last testimony or evidence will ultimately bring conviction to all of the Lord's true people today in the world. They will discern that the systems and theologians in whom they have trusted are going further and further, day by day, away from the appreciation of the true Gospel—the truth as it is in Christ Jesus—into the outer darkness of the world. All who are loyal to the Lord, as they perceive this condition of things, as they recognize the cleavage between belief and unbelief from the Scriptural standpoint will thus be helped, convinced, and enabled to take their stand for the Truth accordingly.

It will be remembered that when Moses and Aaron presented themselves before Pharaoh they performed the first of these signs in his presence—the rod turned into a serpent and being reclaimed was a rod. Pharaoh called for his magicians (types of theologians of today, whose minds, not morals, have become corrupted, and who are reprobates, not morally, but as respects the faith—2 Tim. 3:8), and explained to them that Moses and Aaron claimed that this sign was an evidence of divine power and favor, and asked them if they could not show the same evidences. They replied, Yes, and cast their rods upon the ground and their rods also became serpents; but Aaron's rod-serpent swallowed up all of these. What would this signify? It might mean that so far as the world is concerned the first sign or testimony which convinced the Hebrews will be claimed to be nothing new; it will be claimed that theologians all along have declared and thought that God blesses evil things so that they result in good. But we answer that the view of this subject which God has now displayed to his people is so much more complete that it quite swallows up all these suggestions and theories of the past. What the Lord is now showing proves to his people conclusively not only that some accidents are overruled of the Lord for good, but that all evil of every kind is the result of absence of the divine control, and that when the Lord shortly shall put forth his hand and again take control of earth's affairs, its evil conditions will give place to conditions in accord with the divine character and authority.

It will be remembered also that the first plague which came upon the Egyptians was the turning of all the water of Egypt into blood—the river, ponds, etc.—so that the Egyptians could not drink of the water, but digged for themselves wells near the river. As the water represents truth, the thought here conveyed would be that from the worldly standpoint very soon all truth will become repulsive—every feature of truth connected with the divine plan as represented in the Word of God will become abhorrent; and the digging of wells would seem to imply that, rejecting the Word of God, the world (Christendom—Churchianity) will seek for truth in various ways of their own.

What Shall We Say to These Things?

It should be a great encouragement to us all to find so clearly expressed in the type what we had vaguely and indistinctly hoped for, viz., that the Lord's people of the Royal Priesthood on this side the vail are being used of him in various ways in the accomplishment of his purpose of separating the people of God from others—the wheat from the tares. It is remarkable in this connection that none but the consecrated have ever been successful in connection with the circulation of any of these testimonies. Of the more than two millions of copies of **Millennial Dawn**, Vol. I., now in circulation, remarkably few have been circulatd by any but those who are believers in their testimony and who have circulated them through a desire to be instruments and mouthpieces of the Lord in giving forth his Word—even as was Aaron to Moses.

Let us, then, dear brothers and sisters, feel encouraged as, looking into the type, we see so clear a fulfilment in our day of the things written aforetime for our admonition.—Z. '07 : 276-281.

The Sin of Self-Sufficiency

"Everyone that is proud of heart is an abomination to the Lord."—Proverbs 16:5.

PRIDE would seem to be an inordinate and excessive amount of self-esteem or self-conceit. Everyone should have a reasonable amount of self-appreciation, to the extent that he would be able to know what powers he really has, so that he will not be negligent in the use of these. The feeling that would lead one to think he had no ability when he had ability would be an injurious kind of humility, an excessive humility. There are, indeed, differences of talents—some having a larger number and more valuable talents than others. These are to be esteemed and appreciated, but they are not to be a matter of pride.

Some use the word pride incorrectly. They say "I am proud of my family," when they mean, "I rejoice in my family," or, "I am very pleased with my family—I am glad that my family is what it is." To have an inordinate prejudice that would appreciate everything done by one's family or one's friends and depreciate everything done by the family or the friends of another would be wrong. There is no excuse for pride—and especially none for self-conceit. It is generally due to ignorance; although, of course, when due to ignorance, it is the more excusable.

The pride mentioned in our text is not due to ignorance. It is too great an appreciation of self. All such pride, the Lord tells us, is an abomination in His sight. This is not merely that God does not like it, but that there must be a reason why He abhors it. No creature has any real cause for pride. As the Apostle asks, "What have we that we have not received from the Lord?" We have absolutely nothing. If we had ten talents instead of one, our ability would be nothing to be proud of; we did not produce these talents. On the contrary, they were given to us. But to display the talents or to boast about them would show that we thought they were our own, and that we were proud because of our possession of them.

No man has a right to be proud because of receiving something from another. To that extent he is a debtor, a recipient. In the case of humanity, we are all recipients of the Father's favor. All of the blessings of life—both temporal and spiritual—are of Divine provision for us. And if we have many of these blessings, there is still no occasion for pride. Pride implies a self-sufficiency.

The Scriptures represent Satan as saying that he would like to have an opportunity of displaying his wisdom, his ability. He was confident that he could do something. He did not realize that everything that he had received came from God, and that the one blessed could not rise higher than the Fountain of Blessing. He did not realize that his wisdom and powers were inferior to those of God. Hence, Satan became a transgressor.

We may be sure that if the Lord's people cultivate any heart pride, they have thus a sign that they are not right in the sight of God. Even before they become the Lord's people He has assured them that if they are of a proud heart He will not receive such into His family, will not beget them of the Holy Spirit. Humility is the essential of all who would be of the Lord's family. "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time."—1 Peter 5:6; Matthew 23:12.

Pride Leading to Destruction

Yet there is a spirit of pride in the world. Some are proud of their ancestors; others are proud of their talents, etc. It would not be good that God should bless those who have any other than a grateful feeling of being a recipient of Divine blessing. In fact, the Time of Trouble that is just upon us is the result of pride. All people seem to be proud. We may not be able to judge of the heart, but we do know of their attitude—their feeling of self-sufficiency. Each nation feels that theirs is the greatest talent, theirs are the finest guns, theirs the best everything; and it is this feeling of self-sufficiency that led the nations into the war. Some of them express themselves as trusting that the Lord is on their side. They think that the Lord has always favored them—they are so good and so great that God could not help giving them the victory; and under these delusions they have got into the great war.

In respect to the war and all the troubles that will ensue the Scriptures say, "The proud, yea, all that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of Hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch." (Malachi 4:1.) Pride leads into all sorts of mischief.

Before the Millennium is over, God will see to it that there will not be a root of pride in the whole earth. So at the end of the Millennium there will be no pride amongst the inhabitants of the earth, but there will be an appreciation of God and of what He has done for mankind. There will be a spirit of thankfulness, gratitude, just as we believe it is in Heaven.—Z. '15:174.

"Suffer the Word of Exhortation"

"Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice, and be ye kind one to another."—Ephesians 4:31, 32.

THE same Apostle who uses these words of our text has elsewhere classified these evil fruits here enumerated as works of the flesh and of the Devil. He tells us that they that do these things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God. He indicates that these traits have come with our fallen nature. But we who have left the world, who have renounced its spirit, are under the most solemn obligations as New Creatures in Christ to bring our fallen nature with its tendencies to evil into full subjection to the new nature, to bring the old creature under control of the mind of God, the Holy Spirit, the holy will, crucifying the flesh and bringing every thought into captivity of obedience to Christ. More and more the Lord is impressing this thought upon us day by day.

St. Paul contrasts these fruits of the Adversary and of the fallen flesh with the precious fruits of the Spirit of God. The one Spirit is Heavenly, Godlike, while the other is "earthly, sensual, devilish." Faith, goodness, meekness, gentleness, patience, peace, self-control, love—these are the Heavenly fruits. They are the very opposite of the spirit of the Adversary. As we endeavor to do the will of God, to cultivate the sweet qualities of the Holy Spirit, we find continual warfare with the inherited weaknesses of our fallen flesh. Some may succeed in a comparatively short time in gaining to a large degree the victory over these works of the flesh and of the Wicked one, while others may have a great war to wage. But the victory over this evil disposition **must be won**; else we shall never be granted an entrance into the Kingdom. The Lord is watching to see the zeal and earnestness with which we strive to put off these works of the fallen flesh, these evil traits of character. Knowing our own natural weaknesses, each of us is so to watch and guard himself, so to cry unto the Lord for help, so to fill his heart and mind with the Word of the Lord, that he may be kept pure and free from the alloy of sin.

Coming to analyze the Apostle's exhortation of our text, it would seem as if he were mentioning one of the worst traits first—"all bitterness." Bitterness is an acrid condition, the very opposite of sweetness. It represents a rancor in the heart, and is very closely allied to the last trait mentioned—"malice." Maliciousness in the heart, leads one to malevolence, to seek to do injury to another. The spirit of bitterness and malice, granted an entrance into the heart, is very likely to extend to all the affairs of life and to make complete shipwreck of the New Creature. Its effect is most baneful. While it is possible for one to become angry, and to feel vengeful momentarily, without the feeling amounting to bitterness which would be lasting, without a development of malice, nevertheless, fleshly anger and wrath are sinful, dangerous and certain, if not conquered, to lead to bitterness and malice.

"As Ye Would That Men Should Do Unto You"

The Lord's Word admonishes us, "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath." No matter what provocation one may have had, he should see to it that the matter is settled as quickly as possible. Anger or wrath must not be harbored and cherished; for it is sure to lead to permanent bitterness and hatred. The word **anger** seems not to be so strong a word as **wrath**. Wrath in an imperfect, fallen being, seems to be deep, determined and lasting anger, something that is resentful, retaliatory. **Evil speaking** is a more refined, a more subtle matter, more deceitful, more malicious. Many people become so weak in character, so unbalanced, that they do not realize the proper application of the Golden Rule in their daily lives. They say things of others that they would not wish others to say of them. They treat others in a way that they would not wish to be treated. All such conduct should be put far away from the Lord's children, from those who have taken God's holy Covenant upon themselves and who profess to be God's ambassadors.

We are not saying that there is no such thing as **righteous** anger, righteous wrath. "God is angry with the wicked every day." Even now His righteous wrath is kindled against the nations of the earth, and He is smiting them to their final overthrow. If all anger is wrong, then God Himself would be guilty of sin. But God's wrath, His anger, is always of a proper kind. It is not fleshly anger or bitterness. God is angry with wickedness, and this anger signifies that He will punish it. The Scriptures, however, never refer to the Lord as being bitter or malicious. God is Love; He is patient and good, even to the wicked. He does everything in justice and love.

Now if it is right for God to have certain anger, certain wrath, would it be right on our part to exercise anger or wrath on any occasion? There may, as we have intimated, be times when one may properly be angry. For instance, we should properly feel a certain degree of anger against ourselves. If we found that we had not properly improved our opportunities, if we have been careless or negligent in watching our "thoughts, and words and doings," we might well be provoked, even angry with ourselves. But if the heart is right, we should be neither too indignant nor discouraged on account of our failures in this direction, but strive more and more carefully, with the Lord's assistance, to overcome, endeavoring to learn a lesson from every mistake we make.

Need for Earnest Heart-Searching

Not having the right or the ability to judge the heart of another, we should be very slow to anger, and very careful how we express ourselves. We are to remember that only the Lord has the right to punish. The Lord's people should strive against all of these weaknesses, these blemishes, of the flesh, which are stimulated by the Adversary and his hosts—anger, wrath, strife, malice, hatred. We should fear these things as we would a plague.

What carefulness, what scrutiny of ourselves, what earnest prayer for help, this thought should bring! How we should guard our tongues against evil-speaking, back-biting, slander, for this is the fruit of lovelessness and malice. And in guarding our tongues, we must remember that it is from the **heart** that these evil words proceed. Therefore our heart must be made and kept so loyal to Christ, so in tune with God's Holy Spirit, that it will not send forth any such bitter waters.

The Psalmist says, "Let not an evil speaker be established in the earth." See also St. Paul's counsel to Titus, 3:2-8, and to Timothy. (1 Tim. 3:11.) Oh, that the spirit of love and kindness and consideration one for another might so richly dwell in every member of the Church of Christ that each one would not only refrain from speaking evil of a brother or sister, but that it would give pain to hear a defamatory tale about any one, and particularly about a fellow-pilgrim in the "narrow way"! If this were the attainment of each member of all the different Ecclesias, how much more closely would they be bound together in the bonds of Christian love!

As we have said before, we believe that the majority of the dear friends are developing more and more of this spirit of love and consideration; but there is still room for improvement in the cases of some, at least. The mischief that can be done with the tongue is almost unlimited. How watchful and prayerful, then, we should be of our influence! We urge a careful rereading of Vol. 6, pp. 583-588, of **Studies in the Scriptures.** It is good that our pure minds be stirred up by way of remembrance. We believe that our time is short in which to complete our work of character structure. This should be impressed upon us more and more as we see one after another of the Body members of Christ passing beyond the veil. Let us seek by prayer and by daily, yea, hourly effort, that we may in all things become copies of God's dear Son, and hear, when our time shall come, the Master's sweet "Well done!"—Z. '16:312, 313.

"Think It Not Strange"

"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy."—1 Pet. 4:12, 13.

PERHAPS few have learned to value the discipline of the Lord as did the faithful Apostle who wrote these words. While he as well as others realized that no affliction for the present seemeth joyous, but rather grievous, yet knowing the ministry of such discipline, and recognizing it as an additional evidence of sonship to God, he rejoiced in being a partaker of it.

But why is it that fiery trials must come to us? Is there no way of gaining the crown without these crosses? **No, there is not;** for if ye receive not the discipline of trial "whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons," "for what son is he whom the Father chasteneth not?" Trials of faith and patience and love and endurance are as necessary to our development and our fitting for the high position to which we are called, as are the instructions of the divine Word and the special manifestations of divine grace. The blessed sunshine and shower have their benign influence, but none the less the cloud and the storm; but we need ever to bear in mind that the cloud has its silver lining, and that God is in the whirlwind and in the storm.

Like water upon the parched earth, and like sunshine to vegetation after winter snows, so the message of divine truth comes to us and with it the blessed realization of divine favor. In the joy of our new-found treasure we are apt to think at first that we have actually entered the Beulah land of joy and peace where sorrow and trial can never more come to us. But no; there are sorrows ahead and trials beyond, and we will need all the strength which the truth can give and all the blessed influences that divine grace can impart to enable us to endure faithfully to the end.

But do not stop to worry about the trials until they come; only remember the Apostle's words—"Think it not strange," when they do come. They come to prove you and to strengthen your character and to cause the principles of truth and righteousness to take deep root in your heart. They come like fiery darts from our great enemy, Satan, whose wrath against the children of light is permitted to manifest itself in various ways; but his darts cannot injure those who securely buckle on the divinely provided armor of truth and righteousness. "Wherefore," says the Apostle, "take unto you the whole armor of God, . . . above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked."—Eph. 6:13-17.

The Christian life is thus set forth as a warfare—a warfare, "not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." (Eph. 6:12.) In other words, as Christians, imbued with the spirit of our Master, we find the principles of truth and righteousness which we have espoused, to be at variance with the whole present order of things, which is to a very large extent under the control of "the prince of this world"--Satan. And when sin is thus so inwrought throughout the whole social fabric of the present age: and not only so, but when we also find the flesh, our own old nature, in harmony with it, we see into what close quarters we must come with the enemy, and what a hand-to-hand and life-long struggle it must needs be. Yet our weapons are not carnal, but spiritual: and the Apostle says they are mighty for the pulling down of the strongholds of error and iniquity.—2 Cor. 10:4, 5.

When, therefore, the fiery trials and darts from the enemy come upon you, be ready as an armed soldier of the cross to meet and withstand them. If you run away from them, you are a coward, and not worthy to be called a soldier.—Z. '09:171, 172.

Is Death Extinction?

THE spark of animal energy which God supplied to Adam and which he in turn dispensed to his offspring and which was forfeited for him and his posterity by his act of disobedience, passes at death from the individual, as absolutely as it does from a brute beast. But the word "life" as used in a large number of instances does not stand merely for the spark of animal energy, but is a synonym for soul or being.

In God's purpose and arrangement this being has not in death become extinct, because he has provided for it a future. There is, however, no sentient being in the sense of consciousness, or knowledge, or appreciation of pain or joy, or of any other experience, but the Divine Creator who first gave being has declared that in the case of Adam and his children it is his purpose to provide a Redeemer through whom all may be restored as completely as before they came under the death sentence. The world, which does not recognize God or his power, and which has no knowledge of the promise of resurrection through the merit of Christ's redemptive work, might properly enough speak of one in death as being as extinct as a dead animal; and this is the standpoint of the agnostic; but by believers instructed of God respecting his purpose in Christ, and the resurrection of the dead, eventually, and the opportunity of eternal life to every one, this matter is to be viewed from the same standpoint that our Lord viewed it when he said, "To God all are alive" —that is, God purposes their awakening, and speaks of the present condition of Adamic death as merely a suspension of life, and not as extinction.

Was Christ Extinct During the Period of His Death?

It may be asked, Was not our Lord extinct from the time of his death until his resurrection? The Scriptures tell us that the man Christ Jesus gave himself a ransom for all—a corresponding price. Again they tell us that "Christ died for our sins," and that he "arose again on the third day." But we do not understand that the One who arose was the same in all particulars as the One who died. He was "put to death in flesh": he was "quickened (made alive) in spirit." In his case, therefore, the matter may be viewed from these two standpoints, viz., he died in the flesh, as a man, and as a man has never come to life again, and he never intends to use again, for himself, those manhood qualities. He has been raised from the dead a Spirit—"Now the Lord is that Spirit"—and this glorious Spirit Being whom "God has highly exalted and given a name above every name," is the One who will ultimately bless the world; he has the authority to do this great work in due time.

This power and authority rest in the fact of his sacrifice. The manhood that he laid down, in death, relinquished, he is to give ultimately to Adam and all his race in harmony with the Apostle's statement that "as by man came death," by man will come also the resurrection of the dead," and "as all in Adam die even so all in Christ shall be made alive," all who will come into relationship and harmony with God, through Christ, during this age or the Millennial Age.

We see that the Church, the Body of Christ, has now the imputed merit of his sacrifice to cover all its imperfections and blemishes, enabling them to offer a sacrifice acceptable to God, holy in his sight, that we by suffering with our Lord, might be accounted worthy to reign with him.

We see that God's arrangement was that our Lord Jesus should first sacrifice his human nature at Jordan. He was reckoned dead from that time forward, throughout the three and a half years of his ministry, as well as during the three days he was in the tomb. He was dead so far as his earthly life was concerned, for he had fully surrendered this. At the time he made his consecration God gave him the holy Spirit and the Scriptures explain that this impartation of the holy Spirit signified a begetting of the spirit to a new life; in other words, that a new life there began. That new life developed during the three and a half years; and so with us. From the time we make our consecration and receive the begettal of the holy Spirit, this new life develops and progresses, only that with our Lord the progress was much more rapid in the graces, in all knowledge and harmony with the Father and in the development of himself as a New Creature and in enduring all the necessary tests and trials, because we are handicapped by the imperfections of the flesh, while he was perfect.

The Life of the Flesh vs. the Life of the New Creature

But as it is true with us that the New Creature thrives in proportion as the old creature dies, so it was with our Lord Jesus. He was coming nearer to perfection as a New Creature with every trial and every victory. He was approaching that standard which the Father would approve in the great High Priest and Head of the New Creation, until, at the time of his death, his words were, "It is finished"—his sacrificing of the flesh was finished, and that life which he had consecrated to sacrifice three and one-half years before and which was reckoned as passed away at that time, actually ceased on the cross. The New Creature was not brought forth in the birth of the resurrection, until the third day, but it was there in the Divine sight; it was "not possible that he should be holden of death." The whole matter was in harmony with the Divine plan. As he was **born** from the **dead** on the third day, he must have been **begotten** previous to that birth, and his begetting was, as we have seen, at Jordan, when the Spirit of God was seen descending in the form of a dove.

So, then, coming to the direct question, there are two standpoints of viewing the whole matter and to ignore either would not be wise. That physically our Lord died, lost the spark of life and all conscious existence as absolutely as any others lose it, or as any brute beast ever lost it, there can be no doubt. But the important point is as respects his **soul** or **being**. He never forfeited his **right to life** and it was when he made a consecration of it to death that the Father gave him the new life, and this resurrection life he lived during the three and one-half years of his ministry. The New Creature was **counted** alive from the Divine standpoint, as in the type he is pictured as the great High Priest in the Holy, offering incense. Just so it is with us, his followers. We are **counted** as risen with him from the time we make our consecration and are begotten of the holy Spirit. We are not only **dead** with him, but we shall **reign** with him, and we are **risen** with him **through faith** in the operation of God's power. If we were to lose faith in this operation of God's power we would then be taking our place with the world, for they ignore this power. It is for us to maintain the standpoint of faith, and, while recognizing the facts as respects the real spark of life and its extinction, to recognize also the Lord's Word and to count, as does God, the things that are not yet completed as though they were accomplished.

"God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm.

Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never failing skill,
He treasures up his bright designs
And works his sovereign will.

His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower.

Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan his work in vain;
God is his own interpreter,
And he will make it plain."

—Z. '10: 248, 249.

How Do We Begin the Day?

"WHAT shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of the assembly of His people."—Psalm 116:12-14.

The Editor (Brother Russell) for some months has been trying the plan of calling this text before his mind as his waking thought. He has found it very helpful, and now suggests it to all the readers of this journal.

How appropriate that each day should begin with the inquiry as to what are the possibilities of our service or sacrifices in the Lord's Cause! What is more appropriate than that we should remember the benefits which we have received, as well as those which we hope yet to receive from our gracious Heavenly Father? What could be more appropriate than that we should resolve afresh every morning to take the cup of salvation, remembering that the cup of salvation is the cup of suffering, the cup of trial—**His cup**——the cup of communion, or fellowship, in the sufferings of Christ? As the Master said, so should we each say, daily, "The cup which My Father hath poured for Me, shall I not drink it?"

What is more appropriate than that we each should take pleasure in following our Master, being made partakers of the sufferings of Christ, that we may also be sharers in His glory? What could be more appropriate than that our waking thoughts should recall the Vow which we have made to the Lord, and that those thoughts shall be open to all the congregation of the Lord's people? We will not keep secret the matter of our Vow, nor the matter of our obedience, but we will stimulate one another in the good way.

Furthermore, we call upon the name of the Lord for help, assistance, that the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts and the conduct of our life throughout the day may be pleasing and acceptable in the sight of our Lord. The day thus begun will surely be a happy day to those who have taken the vows of full consecration to the Lord. And what a happifying thought we have in this connection; namely, that so many of the dear brethren and sisters may at the same time be lifting their hearts in thanksgiving and making resolutions afresh.—Z. '13: 6.

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We who have accepted Christ should be awake. Each day and week and month and year should find us more awake and more zealous and more appreciative of our wonderful privileges. Our salvation, our resurrection "change," is surely nearing day by day.—Z. '09:150.

◇

The tongue is the most powerful member of the human body. As the Scriptures say, with it we may praise God or injure men. Not only may we injure those within reach of our tongue, but our words might extend their influence throughout the world and from generation to generation. Our tongues are the most wonderful power that God has given us. It has been said that all of life's experiences deepen when presented in language. When uttered, thoughts impress themselves deeply upon the mind. We should certainly take heed to our tongues.—James 3:9, 10; Z. '12:335.

◇

The Christian takes the extreme view which God sets before him—full consecration unto death. He is considered an extremist, a fanatic, by the world who hate his course and think it foolish. They say, "You Christians raise the standard too high. We are willing to live up to the standard of the majority in our community, but not to yours. You have such peculiar views."

The Lord's people gauge their views, not by what others think, but by what the Word of God teaches. They say, "To my Lord I must be true." To everything else they decline to conform. Thus they are led by the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth, the Spirit of Love, which actuates them. But if this Spirit be extinguished, a mind once under its control will be in a worse condition than that of a worldly mind; for the latter, not having the special direction of the Lord's Spirit, has for its standard the opinion of others. The Lord's people have lost the fear of man, and if they lose also the mind of the Lord, they have no fixed principle to govern their course. Then their natural disposition will assert itself; and the light in them having become darkness, "how great is that darkness!"—Z. '12:291.

◇

The Apostle's exhortation is that we, as saints of the Lord, should live as those will be living when the Day shall have fully come—when the Sun of Righteousness will be shedding its beams over the whole earth. It is a part of our overcoming to live as though the Day were fully ushered in, as though everything had been fully manifested. Whoever will take the Apostle's advice in this matter will certainly have a rich blessing. In fact any other course would be sure to be disastrous to us as New Creatures in Christ!—Z. '15:283.

◇

What a satisfaction, what a comfort has come to the Lord's people through their privilege of being used by him and adopted into his family by the begetting of the holy Spirit, the adoption of the holy Spirit, the anointing of the holy Spirit, the holy influence, the blessing of the Father and of the Son, guiding our judgments, guiding our hearts, opening to us the Scriptures, causing our hearts to burn within us as we are brought to a still greater appreciation of the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of our Father's glorious plan of salvation for ourselves and all the families of the earth!

This abiding was not to be a temporary matter, for a day, a month, a year, but to the end of the age, age-lasting, for the entire period. How glad we are that this is so, and how blessed are the instructions and guidance which we have enjoyed! Truly, as our Lord said, the holy Spirit shows us things to come, and explains to us things that are past. How many of our blessings are along the line of appreciation of coming things—the Millennial Kingdom, the times of restitution, the uplifting and strengthening of all the families of the earth!—Z. '08:139.

◇

Our Master is still able both in temporal and in spiritual matters to do for us exceedingly abundantly more than we could ask or think—"No good thing will he withhold from those that walk uprightly," from those who are his true followers. Their best interests will be preserved and conserved. We may safely take from this matter a lesson in faith—"Greater is he that is on our part than all they that be against us."—Z. '08:59.

◇

The joy, the confidence, the hopes which filled our hearts at the beginning, as we came to recognize the Lord and to have a clearer understanding of the divine plan—have these not continually been added to by the Lord, so that what we first saw and enjoyed seems but small in comparison with the riches of grace and loving kindness and tender mercies revealed to our eyes of understanding. As our mental vision widens we behold lengths and breadths and depths and heights of the love of God surpassing all of our expectations.—Eph. 3:18, 19; Z. '08:15.

◇

It is not the flesh that is to grow up into the Anointed in all things, but the New Creature. And the New Creature never was a sinner. From its very start or begetting it was holy. The New Creature, therefore, does not pass from sin to righteousness, but from one degree to another degree of knowledge and appreciation of righteousness. Every step of the New Creature is progress in Christ—progress along spiritual lines. The Lord has provided spiritual bread and spiritual water for the New Creature in the Bible, and its progress will be in proportion as these are recognized and assimilated.

Character-development is thus a daily, yea, an hourly, experience to these New Creatures. The character of Jesus becomes more and more their spirit, their disposition. If they maintain their original consecration, if they practise the lessons of the Lord's Word, and if they grow strong in the

Lord through partaking of the Lord and His Spirit, they are thus becoming more and more copies of God's dear Son. They were copies of Him, so far as purity and consecration were concerned, at the very start. Their testing is along the lines of continued obedience, continued devotion, as they reach larger degrees of knowledge of the Word of God, of the Plan of God. Like their Redeemer they must demonstrate that they are faithful, even unto death—fully submitted to the Heavenly Father's will, fully loyal thereto.—Z. '16:156.

◆

Humility is important, not only on its own account, but also because the other graces of the holy Spirit cannot be cultivated without it. The Apostle begins the list of these spiritual graces with **meekness.** How could one be gentle or make good progress in the cultivation of these graces if he were not meek? How could one be patient and submissive in the trials and difficulties of life if not meek? How could one be kind toward opponents and in all things if he were not meek? How could one be patient toward all if he were not meek? How could one have brotherly kindness except through meekness? How could one be Godlike except he possessed meekness? How could one be **loving** in the Scriptural sense without meekness? Along these lines all who will be of the Church will be tested.—Z. '11:90.

◆

The Lord stands pledged to help those whose hearts are right toward him.—Z. '09:85.

◆

We, who belong to the King's sons of a higher plane, should search our hearts diligently and scrutinize critically our every thought and word and act to make sure that we are thoroughly loyal to the Lord, our Father, the Great King; that we are not self-seeking, nor humble merely in outward appearance, but humble of heart, and that we are fully desirous of doing the Father's will, and that his will is not grievous to us, but that we can sincerely say, "I delight to do thy will, O my God."—Psa. 40:8; Z. '08:343.

◆

The Master's word is, that whoever sets his affections upon earthly treasures will become sordid, selfish, earthly; while he who sets his affections upon the things above will become correspondingly heavenly, spiritual, blessed, generous. We have two eyes and if they be not properly adjusted with relationship to each other our vision of things will be distorted. Hence we seek to correct such a difficulty, that we may get the true view of matters. So it is with the eye of our understanding. It has both a present and a future outlook, an earthly and a heavenly view. It is important that we get these rightly adjusted, so that we may see matters in their true light—see the great value of the future life in comparison with the present one, and correspondingly be guided to the setting of our heart affections there, and in general balancing all the interests of life wisely.—Z. '10:72-73.

◆

In all the history of the Church there has never been a time in which the great Adversary has been so active in diverting attention from the Truth by introducing unprofitable and irrelevant questions as at present. Just now, when the exaltation and glory of the Church are soon to be accomplished, and when the faithful are about to be received into the joy of their Lord, Satan is resorting to every device in order to beguile them of their reward and to frustrate this feature of the Divine Plan.—Z. '12:195.

◆

All the Covenanters have agreed to glorify God in their bodies, to lay them down faithfully in His service. Anything less could not be acceptable; and we should not think of rendering anything less. Let us, then, proceed with the work of sacrificing these earthly bodies, which are the Lord's—not that we should use them up in a suicidal way, without regard to the strain upon the flesh, but in a reasonable, sane manner let us daily, hourly, glorify God in our bodies, continuing our sacrifice even unto the end, whether that end be a few weeks off or a few months or a few years.—Z. '16:263.

◆

True faith is not credulity. It is critical, and believes only upon good evidence. It criticizes closely and distinguishes clearly between the teachings of men and the substantiated Word of God. But, having found the Word of God, it trusts it implicitly, knowing that its Author cannot lie; and that all his purposes and promises will be accomplished.—Z. '96:162.

◆

All of the saints, "sons," receive some chastisements: some in one way, some in another; some in ways that all can see, some in ways that none but themselves know: some learn the lessons slowly, and some more rapidly: but all have need of divine direction and correction.—Z. '97:16.

◆

"How oft we, careless, wait till life's sweet activities are past,
And break our 'alabaster box of ointment' at the very last!
O, let us heed the living friend, who walks with us life's common ways,
Watching our eyes for looks of love, and hungering for a word of praise!"—Z. '00:378.

◆

The heart that fails to consider the little things, is hindered from a proper consideration of God and from a proper appreciation of His Plan, and thus from a proper appreciation of His Character.—Z. '13:119.

◆

The Father knows just how much we can stand, and will never suffer us to be tempted beyond what we are able to bear, but with every temptation will provide a way of escape.—1 Corinthians 10:13; Z. '14:118.

◆

It is not sufficient for us to have good **intentions,** but these must be brought into practical relationship with our **lives.**—Z. '11:107.

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A. Wilson

Old Corn Gems

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"And they did eat of the OLD CORN of the land on the morrow after the Passover . . . and the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the OLD CORN of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year." Joshua 5:11-12.

A SAFE RULE

"WHERE A BROTHER GIVES AN INTERPRETATION OF A SCRIPTURE WHICH DIFFERS FROM THAT GIVEN BY BROTHER RUSSELL, AND BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION SEEMS REASONABLE AND IN HARMONY WITH THE PLAN OF GOD, THEN WE BELIEVE IT A SAFE RULE TO FOLLOW BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION, FOR THE REASON THAT HE IS THE SERVANT OF THE CHURCH, SO CONSTITUTED BY THE LORD FOR THE LAODICEAN PERIOD; AND THEREFORE WE SHOULD EXPECT THE LORD TO TEACH US THROUGH HIM. WHERE THERE ARISES A DOUBT IN THE MIND AS TO WHICH INTERPRETATION IS CORRECT, THEN IT IS ALWAYS SAFER TO RESOLVE THAT DOUBT IN FAVOR OF BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION. WE BELIEVE SUCH TO BE IN HARMONY WITH THE LORD'S WILL." Z. '18:51.

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What Is Embodied in True Humility?

"Doing nothing from party-spirit or vain-glory, but in humility esteeming others as excelling yourselves."—Philippians 2:3, Diaglott.

LOWLINESS of mind, humility, is a mental quality which enables its possessor to look up with appreciation, not only to God, but also to earthly beings, recognizing their good qualities. The Apostle urges that this lowliness of mind should be in all of God's people: this fact proves it to be a quality that demands careful cultivation.

Not all of the Lord's people are lowly in mind. Some of them think more highly of themselves than they ought to think. Some of them may be proud of having the Truth or of their ability to serve the Truth. Any such pride is very objectionable in the sight of the Lord, and indicates that its possessor has a very small mind; for, with a proper estimate of matters, the best of us can see that we have nothing of which to be proud, nothing of which to boast. If we have received anything of the Lord, we should boast of our receipts, instead of glorying in something as if we had attained it of ourselves.

So the Lord's people should spend earnest effort to stimulate and encourage humility. Some have this quality naturally; but the larger number have to contend against the reverse tendency—self-esteem, self-exaltation, pride—a feeling that they are superior to others.

Suggestions for Self-Examination

When we come to consider St. Paul's injunction, "in humility esteeming others as excelling yourselves," it is a question as to just what the Apostle meant. Those who have come into Christ should make progress, and should therefore feel that they are better than they were before they came into Christ. Those who have come into Christ know that they are not lower than all others. Evidently the Apostle did not mean that the Lord's people should rate themselves as inferior to other men. In his own case he felt that he was the chief of sinners, because he had been an open opposer of the Truth; and Jesus had said that whosoever should injure one of the least of His disciples would transgress seriously. We cannot say, therefore, that we are the chief of all sinners. We think that few of the Lord's people could say, I am the chief of sinners—either from the standpoint of committing crime or from that of persecuting the Church. We are not to bear false witness against ourselves.

In what way, then, are we to understand the Apostle's injunction? In this way: We are to realize that no two of the Lord's people are just alike. If we have the right focus upon the matter, we shall think of our own talents in a humble manner. We shall think, "I have something of this quality or that talent or grace; and therefore I have much responsibility to the Lord. I wonder whether I am using as faithfully as I could, this talent which I think is greater than that of my neighbor or my brother. Though they may have less than I have, they may be using all that they have with more resolute purpose to succeed than I am using what I have. If this be so, then he is better than I am, in this respect."

A Proper Attitude Toward Brethren

As we look around in the Lord's family, we are bound to see the weaknesses and frailties of its various members. We are not to allow our thoughts to dwell too much upon their undesirable qualities, however, but are to remember all their good ones, especially their loyalty of heart. With ourself personally, it is always a recommendation in any one that God has called and accepted him. Whenever we see one who has come into the Truth, we say to ourself, "Well, no matter what he may be according to the flesh, God saw in his heart something good, noble and true; and since God is dealing with him as a son, he is therefore to be esteemed as a brother." Although we might not be able to esteem that man highly according to his natural qualities, yet we would do him good as we had opportunity. He might not be one whom we would select as a companion; yet God may esteem that brother more highly than He does us. Realizing this we would try to keep very humble and to learn whatever helpful lessons we might be able to get from that brother.

In all persons there are certain qualities that may be esteemed and appreciated; even as the old lady said that she could wish that others had as much perseverance as Satan. We are to appreciate good traits whenever we see them in others. We do not know whether in the Lord's sight they may not be more noble, more self-sacrificing, more lowly in mind than ourselves. Our duty is plain. We are not able to read the heart, and hence we are to think kindly and generously of all those whom God has brought into His family. "Love beareth all things, . . . endureth all things." "As we have opportunity, therefore, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them of the Household of Faith."—1 Corinthians 13:7; Galatians 6:10.

Humility the Path to Glory

The Apostles Peter and James also emphasize the necessity on the part of the Lord's people that they be clothed with humility. They tell us that this grace is indispensable to those who would abide in the Father's favor; for God resists the proud, while He continually shows favor to those who are of humble spirit. Thus He encourages humility and discourages pride. (1 Peter 5:5; James 4:6.) We can see a reason for this course. The Almighty sees that we have nothing whatever of which to be proud or to boast. Whatever we have has been of the Lord's providence, or favoring circumstances.

The Scriptures give some marked instances of the evil results of pride. Lucifer, one of the very highest of spirit beings, became proud and vain in his imagination, and encouraging these evil qualities he lost his exalted position, having become Satan, the adversary of God. If Mother Eve had possessed the proper humility she would have said, when tempted of the serpent, I will not listen to this suggestion to disobey my Creator; He knows what is for my highest good, and I therefore submit myself to Him who knows all things. "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall."—Prov. 16:18.

In contrast, we have given to us a beautiful illustration of the opposite spirit—humility—in the case of the Logos. We are shown how He humbled Himself, and how God has highly exalted Him—to the very position which Satan coveted. So if we are fully obedient to the Lord, the results with us will be as with the Lord Jesus, a great blessing, a high exaltation. After presenting this argument, the Apostle says, "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time."—1 Peter 5:6.

The Heavenly Father has deeper love for those who are humble. This is the reason why we should humble ourselves. Since we find that "God resisteth the proud," and that humility is one of the basic principles of a properly crystallized character, we should more and more seek to develop this grace and attain to the attitude in which God can give us the greatest blessing.

The "Sound Mind" Is Humble

To humble ourselves does not necessarily mean to think that we have no talent, no power, no ability. Such an attitude would be foolishness. But we should think soberly of ourselves. We should think of all our powers as coming from God. So if we find that we have some blessings more than our neighbor or our brother or our sister, let us be thankful; but let us not for a moment think that we have anything to make us proud. It is a gift. We should appreciate the gift, but we should not be puffed up over its possession. The fact that we have received the gift indicates that we lacked it, needed it.

The one who has naturally a proud heart, but who brings himself to the point of submission, manifests humility. If, on the other hand, one who by nature has too low an estimate of himself, will submit himself to God, the Father will show him the proper attitude of mind. The Apostle speaks of those who receive the Holy Spirit as having the "spirit of a sound mind." In proportion as we seek to become acquainted with God and to submit ourselves to His will, in that same proportion we become balanced in mind. We become more and more sane, if you please. He who receives the mind of Christ, the mind of God, the holy mind, is instructed more thoroughly by the Word. Thus we are getting the balance of a sound mind, the spirit of a sound mind. Our reasoning faculties become more developed as we grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Truth.

Illustration of True Submission

No one can come to the Father except through full consecration. We must admit that we need the Master, and that without Him we can do nothing. So we take this position: "I am nothing but a sinner; I know that I am imperfect, that I have nothing which I have not received. God provides everything; whatever I have is a gift from Him. Knowing all this, I gratefully accept these things, and humble myself under His mighty hand."

The world says, "No! I will not submit myself; if I need any punishment I will take what is coming to me." Such is the spirit of a worldly heart that has not yet learned its need and its impotence. But the spirit of a consecrated heart is that of submission to the will of the Lord. Such recognize that their only source of help is the Almighty God, through the Lord Jesus Christ as the Savior. For those alone who become His disciples can our Lord become the Advocate; and unless He be the Advocate none can be accepted of the Father. We might have a blessing in the Times of Restitution, but nobody can come to God now except through the Advocate.

The terms of discipleship are that we lay down all earthly rights, earthly interests. Everything must be submitted before the Father will accept us as disciples of Christ at all, before He will beget us of the Holy Spirit, before we can become a part of the anointed Body of Christ. If we would make any true progress, we must say from the heart, "Thy will, not mine, be done." We know that God's will is best, whether we understand that will or not. A person with large self-esteem might, as a natural man, think his own will better; but when he comes to see the Truth, he will say, "I have made mistakes before; but now I will do the Lord's way, regardless of what my judgment may be."

Such a course would evidence real humility, no matter how proud-spirited one might be by nature. As he would progress in the good way, and see more clearly wherein he had made mistakes, his humility would increase. So we are to submit ourselves, humble ourselves, have no will of our own, but merely seek the Lord's will.

Illustration of False Humility

There is such a thing as a false submission, which might deceive even the person himself. One might talk a great deal about submission to the will of God, and yet be only nominally submitting while he is really doing his own will. We are to watch, therefore, that we are carrying out the profession of submission, and that in our daily course of life we are asking, "Is this the course which the Lord wishes me to pursue? Is this the will of God?"

The most submissive will receive the greatest blessings. God will test our submission and our humility. We cannot suppose that our Lord Jesus, who was perfect, did not know that He had perfect powers. But no matter what His own ideas were, He submitted Himself to the Father, and said, "Not My will, but Thine, be done." A man who had no tastes or preferences would be a nonentity. We may know what we would will for ourselves; and yet, knowing this, we are to say to ourselves, "You cannot have your own way about this; you are to seek to know what is the Lord's will concerning you in this matter, and to carry it out, as far as in you lies."

Submission a Test of Loyalty

Sometimes the Lord's hand is very heavy. It was in the case of our Lord Jesus, heavy, pressed down. But when the Lord felt the Father's hand pressing down, He meekly bowed Himself beneath the weight, in humble acquiescence to the will of the

One whose purpose He had come to carry out. But the Hand did not crush Him, although it seemed to do so. Instead of being a crushing, it was the Hand of Love, testing His obedience to the full. When His obedience was fully tested, the same Hand lifted Him up and "set Him at His own right hand in the Heavenly places: far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come."—Ephesians 1:20-23.

Thus it will be with us, if we are found faithful. God will exalt us in due time. But He cannot exalt any who are not humble. Submission indicates faith. We would not submit ourselves unless we had absolute confidence in God. And not **faith** only, but **loyalty** also, is necessary. Therefore the Father tests us in these two qualities. Without these, we would be quite unfit for the Kingdom: and so the various tests of the present time are tests of faith and loyalty to God, and of entire submission to His will. It is to those "who, by **patient continuance** in well doing, **seek for** glory and honor and immortality" that God has promised "eternal life."—Romans 2:7.

We should recognize Divine providences and look for them. We should expect God's providential leadings in all of life's affairs. We should not pass through life with the thought that we are running this, or regulating that. As a child would look to his parent, or a pupil to his teacher, or as an apprentice to his master, or a maid to her mistress, so should our eyes be looking to the Lord asking His guidance.—Psalm 123:1, 2.

Our Attitude in Trial

This Divine guidance we should seek in all things. Suppose that some business complication arises. Perhaps one loses his situation. A child of God who had not learned full submission to the Lord's will might immediately blame some one else or find fault with his employers. But the right attitude for the Lord's people would be to say, "The Father knows all about this matter: He could have prevented it and would have done so had it been for my best interests. There is some lesson here for me to learn, and I will look for it." If he should discover that there had been some carelessness on his part, then he must perceive that the logical consequence would be that he lose the position.

But if after careful investigation of matters, he feels that he could not have been more faithful or more loyal to duty, then he should look further and say, "Lord, I do not see wherein I have deserved to lose this situation, but I am looking to Thee, to see what is Thy providence in the matter: for Thou knowest that I must have some kind of employment: and therefore I merely pray, Give me this day my daily bread. I cannot suppose that this is accidental. Surely Thou hast some lesson for me in this experience. I know not what Thy providence may be. Give me, I pray, the necessary grace and wisdom to perceive Thy will."

As he prays thus, he should at the same time be on the lookout for the Lord's providences and guidance. The child of God who thus acknowledges the Lord, and is faithful to Him in all the details of life's affairs, is the one who will come off victorious and be participator with the Master in His Kingdom. This great exaltation will be given all who are fully submissive to God's will, whether their powers and talents be many or few.

The Highest Standard of Obedience

In our context the Apostle Paul urges that the Church cultivate the mind of Christ. He says, "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." He had been reciting the qualities necessary to the Church in order that they could be acceptable to the Father. Amongst these was an eager desire to please God. The Apostle exhorts all such to pursue the course of humility and submission taken by our Lord as the only proper path for the Master's footstep followers. St. Paul was endeavoring to impress that the mind of Christ was eminently worthy of imitation and painstaking cultivation.

As a further evidence of the Master's great humility, the Apostle brings forcefully to their attention what Jesus was in His prehuman existence. As the Logos, He was in the form of God—the spirit condition. Yet He was not ambitious: He was not self-seeking. On the contrary, He made Himself of no reputation—divested Himself of His former glory and honor, that He might do the will of the Father. His spirit was directly opposite to that of Satan. The Logos thought not to usurp the Father's place, or to claim equality with Him, but manifested a very different disposition—an attitude of humility. Then "let this mind be in you," urges the Apostle. "Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time." Consider that God has called you with the same High Calling, that you might attain to a place at the right hand of Christ, even as He attained to a place at the Father's right hand. Realizing this, permit this mind of Christ to be in you.

God was not seeking to force this mind upon Christ, nor is He seeking to force it upon us. Our Lord having taken this position of humility, in order to be man's Redeemer, it was needful that He maintain that mind in order to work out the blessed fruitage of patience. Three and one half years were required for Jesus to complete His work: and it was not until after He reached the Cross and could say, **"It is finished,"** that He was "set down with the Father in His Throne." If we have become Jesus' disciples, if we have accepted the conditions of the High Calling, if we have received this mind, then we are to let, or permit, this mind to work out in us the character-likeness of our Head.

The Universal Standard of Obedience

We have seen that the Logos did not meditate the usurpation to be equal with God, but humbled Himself. Lucifer took the opposite course. Instead of humbling himself, he said, "I will be like the Most High." (Isaiah 14:14.) Here we have an illustration of what we should not do. It is a principle of the Divine Government that "He that exalteth himself shall be abased, but he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time."—Luke 14:11; 1 Peter 5:6.

Every creature of God, whether angel or man, should have this humble mind. This is the only proper attitude. This test comes during the Gospel

Age to only the Lord and the Church. To what extent it may ever come to others is a question. It would seem to be impossible for this test to come to all. Those who have the right disposition will desire to do the Father's will at any cost. Doubtless if any one of the holy angels were allowed the privilege of becoming the Redeemer of a race, he would be glad to do so. We do not know, however, just how it would have been had the angels not seen the result of the obedience of the Logos to the will of the Father.

The world will be subjected to a test during the Millennial Age. The proper attitude for every creature would be to risk everything in the Father's service; it will eventually be the standing of the world of mankind—every one who shall attain everlasting life. We must remember, however, that **Divine Justice** never calls for **self-sacrifice.** It calls for **obedience**; and the obedience of the Church is the extreme of obedience—even **"unto death."** But the Father has offered a reward so high that such obedience has become the standard par excellence throughout the Universe.—Revelation 2:10; Z. 16: 35-37.

If Ye Do These Things

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"For if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."—2 Pet. 1:10, 11.

THIS statement of the Apostle Peter is suggestive of several important thoughts: (1) It indicates the possibility to the class addressed of "an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." This is the prize of the high calling of the overcoming saints of the Gospel age. True, when we consider its exceeding glory, faith is prone to stagger at the promise that, poor and imperfect though we be, God proposes in the ages to come to show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. (Eph. 2:7.) Nevertheless, such is the case: "unto us are given the exceeding great and precious promises, that by these we might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust"—through the worldly desires, "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life."—2 Pet. 1:4; 1 John 2:16.

These exceeding great and precious promises contemplate the adoption of these called ones by the great Sovereign of the whole universe as his sons and heirs; as joint-heirs with his only begotten Son, the heir of all things: they shall be with him where he is and behold his glory; and they shall put off this mortality, and, like him, who is "the express image of the Father's person," they shall be clothed with immortality. So shall they be forever with the Lord, and see him as he is; for they shall be like him. Having overcome the world, they shall sit with him in his Kingdom, even as he overcame and sat down with the Father in his Kingdom.—Rev. 3:21.

"Fear not, little flock," says the prospective Bridegroom of the Church, "for it is your Father's **good pleasure** to give you the Kingdom," "for the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me and have believed that I came out from God." Nor will he give the Kingdom to his beloved grudgingly; for Peter says, "an entrance shall be ministered unto you **abundantly**:" there will be **a glorious welcome,** a joyous greeting and a coronation jubilee among all the heavenly hosts when the laurels of victory are placed upon the heads of all the overcoming soldiers of the cross, the heroes who nobly fought the good fight of faith—who kept the faith, fought the fight against the world, the flesh and the devil, and finished their course in faithfulness even unto death.

All this abundance of grace and glory is the possible inheritance of even the weakest saint who, trusting not to his own ability to make his calling and election sure, humbly looks to God for strength from day to day to endure hardness as a good soldier. If any man attempts to do this in his own strength, he must surely fail; for the **fiery trial** that is to try **every one** will prove too much for the mind of the flesh; but God who worketh in the consecrated to will and to do his good pleasure, will so fortify and equip those who depend upon his grace, that, with the Psalmist, they can say, "It is God that girdeth me with strength. . . . By thee I have run through a troop, and by my God have I leaped over a wall;" and with Paul, "I can do all things through Christ, who strengtheneth me."—Psa. 18:32, 29; Phil. 4:13.

(1) Let us not fear, then, to lay hold upon the exceeding great and precious promises when we are so fully assured that he who has begun the good work in us will finish it, if we let him. (Phil. 1:6.) "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith"—not faith in ourselves; for we can have no confidence in the flesh. The poor, weak and faltering flesh does not warrant us in reposing confidence in its ability for the great responsibilities of soldiers of the cross. We must draw our supplies of wisdom and strength from above: they are not within us except as implanted there by the spirit of God.

(2) We next notice that while Peter's words encouragingly indicate the possibility of the glorious inheritance to all who are called, there is also the implied possibility of failure to enter into it. There is an **"if," a contingency,** upon which the scales of divine judgment as to our worthiness or unworthiness of the inheritance must turn. And it is in view of this contingency that Paul urges all the called ones to great sobriety of mind and carefulness of conduct, saying, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall;" and again, "Let us therefore

fear lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." It is not enough, therefore, that we have **consecrated** ourselves to God as living sacrifices; that we have **covenanted** to follow in the footsteps of Jesus; for the consecration, the covenant, the promise will avail nothing if we prove unfaithful to it, except to rise up in judgment against us. "Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay."—Eccl. 5:4, 5. See also Deut. 23:21-23; Prov. 20:25; Heb. 10:38, 39; Psa. 15; Luke 9:62; John 15:6; Acts 5:4, 5.

(3) Our attention is next drawn to what is implied in this expressed contingency—"If ye **do these things**." What things?—The reference is to the things mentioned in the preceding verses; **viz.**, that with all diligence we add to our faith fortitude; and to fortitude knowledge; and to knowledge self-control, and to self-control patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness love."

It is important to observe here that while all of these virtues are imperative requirements of those who would be esteemed of God as faithful, they are only of value as they are added to, or built upon, a foundation of faith—"Giving all diligence **add to your faith,**"—your "precious faith," as described in verse 1. This faith is **our abiding confidence in the divine plan** of salvation, which centers in the redemption accomplished through the precious blood of Christ, who freely gave himself a ransom for all. No righteousness of our own without this foundation of faith can avail anything to commend us to God. All our works of righteousness must be built upon this faith.

But is not faith in Christ sufficient unto salvation without the subsequent **doing** of any thing? To this the Scriptures plainly answer that a faith that Christ will save us in our sins—while we still love sin and do the works of sin—is a misplaced faith; for Christ never proposed to save us **in** our sins, but **from** our sins; and God is **faithful** and just to forgive sins and to cleanse from all unrighteousness those who come unto him by Christ,—through faith in his shed blood (sacrificed life) as the propitiation or satisfaction for our sins, and in his cleansing power. "He that saith, I know him [Christ, as my Lord and Savior], and keepeth not his commandments [to do the works of righteousness, and to bring forth the fruits of repentance of sins], **is a liar,**" says the Apostle John, "**and the truth is not in him.**" (1 John 2:4.) Therefore the Apostle Paul also exhorts believers, saying, "Beloved, **work out** your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."—Phil. 2:12, 13.

It was God that provided for us the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, and it is God that has drawn us unto himself and that has promised us all needed grace to walk in the paths of righteousness; and more, even to follow in the footprints of Jesus in the way of self-sacrifice. While, therefore, with fear and trembling,—with great **carefulness**—we endeavor to work out our salvation, it is our privilege always to realize the promised grace to help in every time of need, and to be confident that our best **efforts** toward righteousness are acceptable to God when presented through the merit of the righteousness of Christ, imputed to us by faith.

Having this foundation, then, and "having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust"—through the desires of the flesh—and having by faith laid hold also on the "exceeding great and precious promises" of being made partakers of the divine nature and joint-heirs with Christ of his Kingdom and glory . . . let us consider these **additions** to our faith, which, if possessed and continuously cultivated, are the assurance that we shall never fall, and that an abundant entrance into the Kingdom shall be granted to us.

The first addition **(virtue)** is **fortitude** or strength of character in righteousness. This implies the cultivation of the strictest integrity in our dealings, both with God and with our fellow men,—scrupulous honesty, justice and truth being the only standard. The Psalmist clearly defines it thus, saying, "He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth **in his heart.** He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbor, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbor; in whose eyes a vile person is condemned; but he honoreth them that fear the Lord. He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not [i.e., who will not violate a contract found to be unfavorable to him]. He that putteth not out his money to usury [taking unjust advantage of the necessities of others], nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these things shall never be moved." (Psa. 15.) Such a one is a virtuous man, a man of fortified or strong character.

The second addition is **knowledge**—the knowledge of God and of his righteous will concerning us (revealed through his Word, by the holy spirit). Neglect of this divinely appointed means of knowledge is equivalent to setting up our own imperfect standard of righteousness and ignoring the divine standard. It is therefore important that we give all diligence to the study of the divine oracles that we may be fortified in faith and works accordingly.

The third addition, **self-control,** is one of the most important elements of good character. He that ruleth his own spirit is greater than he that taketh a city, is the counsel of the wise man; and many a victorious general has yet to learn to conquer and control himself. Self-control has to do with all our sentiments, thoughts, tastes, appetites, labors, pleasures, sorrows and hopes. Its cultivation, therefore, means a high order of character-development. Self-control, accompanied by faith, fortitude, knowledge from on high, implies increased zeal and activity in divine things and increased moderation in earthly things, in judgment, in conduct, in the regulation of temporal affairs, etc. "Let your moderation be known unto all men."

The fourth addition is **patience.** Time is a very necessary element in the process of perfecting every good thing. The fruit hastily plucked is the unripe, hard, sour, bitter fruit. Time, as well as pruning and fertilizing and cultivating and shower and sunshine, is necessary to the ripe and luscious fruitage that delights the taste. So it is also with the fruitage of plans and purposes, of education and of grace. God's deep designs work out slowly, not only in his great universal government, but also in the hearts and minds of his intelligent creatures. God is operating all things according to his own will along the lines of the fixed principles of his wise and righteous laws—physical, moral and intellectual. To be impatient in any case is foolishly to insist upon having the unripe, hasty, sour, bitter fruitage, which, if the Lord grant it, will prove a sickening penalty for the impatience that demanded it. "Let patience have her perfect work," wait God's time: "Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him." Wait the Lord's time and way and the indications of his will in every case, both with regard to ourselves and others and "they that put their trust in him shall never be confounded."

Faith, fortitude and knowledge prepare God's people to have patience with every effort toward good, however weak,—patience with the poor, blinded world, with the slow and stupid, with the excitable and blundering, with the over-confident Peters and the skeptical Thomases. But to have patience or fellowship with "the unfruitful works of darkness" and sin, is the perversion of this grace: for these, wherever found, should be promptly and sharply reproved and rebuked according to their **evil intent;** with patience, nevertheless, toward the repentant prodigals, and always with meekness.

It is noticeable that the Lord seems to forewarn his people of great need of patience in the end: patience toward fellow men and patience, in the warfare against evil, and in waiting for the Lord's time and method of setting right the wrongs of "the present evil world." The poor world, lacking faith, fortitude, knowledge of the divine plan and patience will fall a ready prey to unrest and anarchy in the near future. The Word of the Lord to his people is, —"Ye have need of patience."

The fifth addition is **godliness,** godlikeness, piety, —that devout, controlling reverence for God which yields a hearty, cheerful, loving conformity to his will—fervency of spirit in serving the Lord. This is a later development and vital element in the Christian character. Piety, godliness, springs spontaneously from appreciative and grateful hearts, whose delight is in the law of the Lord, in meditation upon his precepts and promises, and in secret communion with God in prayer and praise. Loving, cheerful activity must result from such an inner life: for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh, and the whole being is quickened to new life. Only those who have a living faith in God, and who are fortifying their characters against evil and growing in knowledge and self-control and patience are prepared to appreciate the grandeur of the divine character; and only such are really energized by a desire for God-likeness.

The sixth addition is **brotherly kindness,** which of necessity grows out of godliness. As god-likeness presupposes the other graces mentioned, so its development implies an appreciation of divine justice and beneficence, and will deepen our sentiments toward all the well-disposed, however imperfect, and especially will it enlarge our hearts to all who are of the household of faith—"the brethren."

The seventh addition is charity, **love,**—the bond of perfectness which unites all the other graces, and as a name stands for them all.

Love to God alone is not the full manifestation of this grace; nor can there be, according to the teachings of God's Word, a sincere love for God, without a corresponding love to man: "If a man say, I love God," says the Apostle John, "and hateth his brother, **he is a liar,** for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" (1 John 4:20.) And Jesus said, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, **if ye have love one to another.**"—John 13:35.

It is the abounding of these graces of character **added** to our faith in Christ as our Redeemer and Savior that insures the soul against the possibility of falling: "If ye do these things, **ye shall never fall.**" The contingency is not in the doing of these things **perfectly,** and regardless of the righteousness of Christ to cover our transgressions and compensate for our daily shortcomings; but if, **added** to our faith in the imputed righteousness of Christ, we have cultivated all these graces **to the extent of our ability,** we shall not fall. When we have done all that we can do, we are still unprofitable servants, not daring to trust in our own righteousness, but in the ample robe which is ours by faith in Christ, while, with consistent "diligence," we work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, knowing that the righteousness of Christ is only applied to such as desire to forsake sin and to pursue that "holiness without which no man shall see the Lord."—Heb. 12:14; Z. '97:145-148.

"That He May Establish Your Hearts"

> "The Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you: to the end he may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at [in] the presence [parousia] of our Lord Jesus Christ, with all saints."—1 Thess. 3:12, 13.

NOT TO SINNERS are these words addressed, but to saints. Not those who have not the Spirit of Christ, the spirit of love, and who therefore, are none of his, does the Apostle exhort: but those who already have been begotten of the holy Spirit of love. Increase in love signifies that love already has attained an ascendancy in the heart, a mastery in the mind, by which it is progressing, conquering and bringing into subjection all the thoughts and conduct of life. And this thought, that love is to increase in the hearts of God's people, is in full accord with the general testimony of the Scriptures, that we are to **grow** in grace and in knowledge and in love; approaching more and more and attaining and **maintaining** the "mark" which God hath set before us as the standard of character for which he will be pleased to award the prize in due time. It is as though a cistern were being filled more and more with pure water from hidden springs, until, increasing and increasing, it overflows with its abundance. Thus the Lord's people are to increase in love continually, until the love abounds or **overflows** in all the thoughts and words and conduct of life; not only carrying blessings to their own refreshment and to the refreshment of all with whom they come in contact, but also redounding to the glory and praise of God from whom this blessing is derived.

The Apostle specifies only abounding love toward the brethren and toward all, but this presupposes the love which, first of all, is due to God our Father. Nor is it to be expected that any man will love his fellow-creatures to the extent indicated, unless he has first learned to love his Creator, has been taught of him, and has to some extent become a copy of his dear Son. This is in thorough accord with the Lord's statement of the full meaning of the Law, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy mind, heart, soul [being], and strength, and [then] thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." No man can love his neighbor in this Scriptural sense, until he has first loved his God to such a degree as to be not only willing but anxious to do those things which are pleasing in his sight; for God is love, and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God.—1 John 4:16. . . .

The Apostle in our text tells us why it is necessary that we progress. It is "to the end," or with the object in view, of our hearts being established, fixed, settled, rooted, grounded in holiness. It is not sufficient, from the Divine standpoint, that we learn something about love, and have the feeling of love thrilling our hearts, and that generous emotions shall occasionally be ours; what the Lord seeks is "a peculiar people," "a royal priesthood," thoroughly established, firmly fixed in love for righteousness—so that all unrighteousness, all sin, all injustice, would be an abomination to them. Not only will they not love iniquity, but, as the scriptures declare, they will hate iniquity. And whoever truly loves righteousness must in the same proportion hate iniquity. But this is only the result of **fixed** character, and time and experience and many lessons from the Word of God and from the book of experience are necessary before character becomes so settled, so crystallized, that it is fixed and unwavering in its loyalty to righteousness. It is for this reason that the Lord has hedged up the way of his people during this Gospel Age, and made the way of life, the way to the Kingdom, a "narrow" one, full of difficulties, full of trials, which thereby become tests, and sift out those who do not develop the character which the Lord approves, and for which he promises a share with Christ in his Kingdom.

Some may say, Alas! If the standard of character is so high as to be unblameable before God, who is perfect, how can I ever hope to attain it? And so all of us might say, if the perfect standard were a standard for the **flesh**; for all of us have learned, as did the Apostle, that "In my flesh dwelleth no good [perfect] thing"; and we have the inspired Word for it that "There is none righteous; no, not one." So, then, we may rest assured that God is not seeking to find in any a perfection of the flesh, and that if he should seek perfection in the flesh he would not find it. It is not such an unreasonable and impossible thing that the Apostle teaches; but something quite reasonable, viz., as he says, that our **hearts** may be established, fixed, in holiness before God our Father. Ah, yes! To have a **heart** [will—motive—intention] that is blameless, is a very different thing from having **flesh** that is blameless. The **heart** standing for the will, the intention, the desire, represents the "new creature." The flesh stands for itself. In its imperfection and its six thousand years of degradation as the slave and servant of sin, the flesh has become so imperfect that it is impossible to have it serve the law of God perfectly; impossible to have it obey all the good desires of our consecrated hearts unblamably. It is the new creature, the new mind, that must reach this stage of development where **it** will be **unblameable** before the Father.

Not only is this a possible attainment, but we cannot conceive of any other condition being acceptable to God, in harmony with our calling. He has called us to be his Church, his Royal Priesthood, that he might fit and prepare us for the great work of blessing all the families of the earth as members of the Body of Christ, otherwise called the Bride, called to association with the heavenly Bridegroom during his Millennial Kingdom. Surely God could ask nothing less than that our hearts, our intentions, should be in accord with the principles of righteousness, and that these principles should control our daily lives to the extent of our ability; and that thus we should seek to put away all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit, and to perfect holiness in the reverence of the Lord. (2 Cor. 7:1.) Anything less than this good desire and endeavor could not possibly be acceptable in the sight of God; without these we could not hope to be of the finally acceptable elect Church. But how reasonable is this arrangement! How gladly do we accept the Divine will! How earnestly we wish that every imperfection and blemish of the flesh were done with, that the testings of our new minds were accomplished in their full establishment in righteousness! How we long to have our new bodies, promised to us in the "first resurrection"—bodies in which the new mind can act perfectly, without hindrance, without restraint, and glorify God perfectly in every act and word, as well as in our hearts, intentions! This is acceptable to God. He counts it, through the merit of Christ, exactly as though we were absolutely perfect in word and in deed, since such a condition is the desire of our hearts, our wills; he is waiting until this character is **fixed,** permanent.

That We May Be Established—Fixed—in the Presence of Our Lord

We perceive that this lesson comes up to date, in the sense that while it has been applicable to the Lord's people all through this Gospel Age, it is specially applicable to us who are now living in the time of the presence of the Son of man. For mark the Apostle's words in our text, that all this development in the spirit of love is to the end that we may be established, fixed, "in the presence **[parousia]** of our Lord Jesus Christ, with all saints." We are now in this time of his **presence,** and it behooves us to inquire carefully of our hearts to what extent we are established in righteousness, in love for it, or to what extent our loyalty to righteousness is still unsettled —wavering.

We may be sure that all who do not come to this condition of establishment in righteousness will be tested, sifted and rejected. . . . The Apostle asks, "Who shall be able to stand?" This is the question: Who shall be so thoroughly established in love that the trials and testings, necessary to prove him so, will be passed successfully? According to this we are not to wonder if various special trials are permitted to come, thick and fast—trials which will test and prove our loyalty to the Lord and to the principles of love. Yet we are not to be discouraged with this thought of testing, but are to remember that he who began the good work in our hearts, began while we were yet sinners, by giving for us the great ransom price; that if he so loved us then, while we were yet sinners, much more does he love us now that we have accepted his grace, and are justified from all sin by faith in his blood, and are seeking to walk in his footsteps. And all who have this desire to receive the Lord's lessons, and to profit by them, and to become more and more copies of Jesus—all such have the assurance that it comes, not by their strength, but by the Lord's strength: and that if they submit themselves to him, he will perfect in them his spirit of love and righteousness and holiness: that they may be "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light."—Z. '10: 259-262.

The Fall of Jericho

Joshua 6: 8-20.

Golden Text:—"By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they were compassed about seven days."—Heb. 11:30.

LONG before the Canaanites had been accursed! Long before their land had been promised to the children of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob! The Lord's time had now come to give possession; and the place of entrance was close to Jericho. Jericho was accursed or condemned: its time of judgment had come as that of Sodom four centuries before in the same rich, fertile valley. But God would vary the method for a purpose. As he had made of the Sodomites an illustration of those who would suffer everlasting destruction or Second Death (Jude 7), so he would now illustrate another thing in the Jerichoites: he would show in their slaughter how the "old man" of our fallen nature is to be utterly destroyed by us as New Creatures under the lead and instruction of the real Joshua—Jesus.

Nothing could be done—none could fight against Jericho—until they had been circumcised; which typified the circumcision of the heart, the putting away, the cutting off, of the love of sin from the hearts of the true Israelites. The next lesson to be typified was that our power over our natural desires (represented by the Jerichoites) must come from God. The natural desires and appetites are protected by strong walls, the will of the flesh, which first must be broken down before we as New Creatures can conquer our natural selves, our depraved appetites or desires.

This power of God in the type was shown in the fall of Jericho's wall; but before it fell the faith of the circumcised ones was made active as shown in the seven days marching around the city and seven times on the seventh day, representing completeness. The slaughter of the Jerichoites, then, represented the victory of true Israelites over self-will, self-love, self-indulgence, and over every enemy of the new nature—for the two are contrary one to the other and one or the other must die.—Compare Gal. 5:16, 17.

Everything in Jericho was accursed, condemned or devoted; and so everything in and of our carnal nature is condemned or devoted—every living creature must be put to death. This represents that every active influence and principle of the fallen nature must be destroyed. "Mortify [kill], therefore, your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence [desire], and covetousness [greed], which is idolatry."—See Col. 3: 5-10.

Yet the deliverance of Rahab (who afterward married into the tribe of Judah and became an Israelite, and has the honor of being one of the ancestors of our Lord Jesus) shows in type that some of our members, once enemies of the new nature, may be so transformed that instead of becoming the servants of sin they may become servants of righteousness, through full consecration. For instance, talents for speaking, writing, teaching, etc., once used in the service of Satan and sin may be reckoned dead and quickened to newness of life and activity in God's service. But as such a transfer could only be through a reckoned death and quickening through faith in the great sacrifice for sin, this too must be illustrated in the type. And it was illustrated in the act of faith which displayed the scarlet cord.

The inanimate valuables, the gold, silver, brass and iron vessels, etc., were all consecrated, too, but not to destruction; they were to be devoted to the Lord's service. So with the truly circumcised Israelites indeed: not only are all their carnal powers to be destroyed as servants of sin, but all that they possess is to be consecrated to the Lord's service, their treasures of gold and silver and their ordinary possessions represented in the vessels of brass and iron. All must now be considered as belonging to the Lord: and any appropriation of these to their own selfish uses brings a curse, as was illustrated by the sin of Achan, who appropriated of the spoils of Jericho some gold and silver and a fine Babylonish garment. The result of his covetousness was his own destruction, and for a time he troubled all Israel.

So, amongst Spiritual Israelites, covetousness of gold, silver and the fine Babylonish garments is a most fruitful source of spiritual weakness and in many leads to destruction. "For the love of money is a root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith and pierced themselves through with many arrows. They that will [to] be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness."—1 Tim. 6:9-11.

The blowing of the trumpets by the priests may well be understood to typify the proclamation of God's Word against sin and his assurance to his people that he is able and willing to give the circumcised New Creatures victory over their carnal propensities. Not until we understand the assurance of the Word of the Lord and have faith therein are we able to blend the shout of victory with the shout of trumpets and see the obstacles to self-mortification fall before us.—Z. '07:300, 301.

Some Interesting Questions Answered

Light Increases Responsibility

Question.—"If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin."—John 15:22. Please explain.

Answer.—Our Lord explained to the Scribes and Pharisees that the light of His teaching gave a greater responsibility to those who heard it than to those who had not heard it. If they had never come in contact with the light, they would never have sinned against the light; and therefore, their sin was greater in proportion to the greater blessing.

So it is today. If you had never had your eyes opened, if you had never heard more than the heathen, then you would not have any more sin than other heathen people whose eyes have never been opened. But when you sin with a measure of wilfulness against the light and knowledge, your sin will be the greater. Your responsibility is in proportion to the light. This seems to be the reasonable view of the matter.—Z. '12:87.

the light they should have got

Difference Between Fruits and Graces of Spirit

Question.—What is the difference between "the fruits of the Spirit" and "the graces of the Spirit?"

Answer.—The expression "fruits of the Spirit" has very much the same significance as "graces of the Spirit." One term might be proper to use at one time and the other at another time, according to the figure of speech which would be appropriate. If we were speaking of a quality which was being developed, it would be proper to think of the fruitage of the Spirit—those beautiful qualities worked out in our lives through the indwelling of the Spirit of God. If we were speaking more particularly of the individual and his conduct, we might more appropriately say that the graces which he manifested and which he had developed were brought out through his possession of the Holy Spirit, through his possession of the spirit of love.—Z. '12:87.

The Value of Moderation (forbearing)

"Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand."—Philippians 4:5.

Question.—The Apostle Paul says, "Let your moderation be known unto all men." What is the particular thought here in the word "moderation," and what is the connection between these words and the sentence, "The Lord is at hand," which follows?

Answer.—The Spirit of the Lord is said to be a spirit of wisdom, a spirit of justice, a spirit of love, a spirit of a sound mind. Whoever, therefore, receives the Spirit of the Lord, in proportion as he receives it, has these qualities of mind and heart. At the beginning of a Christian's experience, the measure of this moderation, or reasonableness, or gentleness, is of course, comparatively small. But he gradually gets a greater appreciation of the value of this quality. His ideas become more reasonable as he becomes sanctified by the Spirit. He will have more and more of the spirit of a sound mind, of gentleness, meekness, and will become more and more prepared for the Kingdom soon to be established.

This attitude of mind comes in large measure as a result of knowledge. As he comes to know more about God and His plans, more about the origin of sin in the world, how it came about and how its penalty has passed upon all men by a process of heredity, the true disciple of Christ feels more of the spirit of moderation and acts with more consideration and charity toward others than if men were perfect. As we realize that these imperfections vary in number and in degree in different persons, so in our dealings we must be moderate toward all, wise in our dealings with all, patient toward all, having the spirit of justice, of reasonableness, of mercy.

This injunction of the Apostle does not refer to the exercise of this quality toward the Church only, but toward all men. Properly, of course, this moderation would begin at home, and would be more particularly manifest in good works in the Church, as in opposition to the evil sentiment—anger, malice, evil-surmising, hatred, strife—works of the flesh and of the Devil. But the spirit of moderation should not be confined to the home, but should be manifested toward all with whom we have intercourse or dealings. It was said of the Apostles that people "took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus and learned of Him." We should so live before all, both the brethren and the world, that they would thus taken knowledge of us. We should see to it that our conduct is a credit to the great and noble Cause with which we are identified.

The connection between letting our moderation be known and the statement. "The Lord is at hand," seems to be that the Lord's people are to have in mind their expectation based upon the promises of God's Word, that Messiah's Kingdom is shortly to be established, and that this should help them in living an exemplary life. Whether the passage should be considered from the viewpoint that the Church of the Apostles' time were living in the latter part of the great seven-thousand-year-week, and that the great Sabbath was at hand, when the Lord was about to come and set up His Kingdom and set things straight in the world, and that hence they could well be patient and considerate, or whether it should be from the viewpoint of time—that the Lord's children should exercise the grace of moderation because they had little time left in which to manifest it—we do not know. At any rate, knowing that the opposition of sin will not last very much longer, we may have the greater patience and exercise this patience with the greater ease when we have this thought before our minds.

The Apostle gives a similar thought when he says that the tribulations which the Lord's people undergo are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in them. This should make us very moderate, very forbearing, under circumstances which would make others very rude, very angry, very immoderate. We can be very gentle, not only because of our knowledge of the nearness of the Kingdom, but also because of our knowledge of the weaknesses of others, which cause them to impinge upon our rights.—Z. '16:29, 30.

How Far Shall We Sacrifice Legitimate Pleasures?

Question.—What are the rights and privileges of the flesh—not sinful—which are to be sacrificed by the New Creature in Christ Jesus?

Answer.—There are certain rights and privileges which belong to all human beings. There are tastes and desires that are not sinful. It is not sinful to eat and enjoy that which is wholesome and nutritious; not sinful to have preferences as to what one shall eat. It is not sinful for one to have strawberries in the winter when that fruit is expensive, if one has the money to buy them and if he obtained the money rightfully. It would not be sinful to pay fifty cents or a dollar a box for them. It is no crime to have a fine house, servants, a pleasure yacht, an automobile, etc. If there are entertainments, concerts, operas, and these are of good moral tone, one has a perfect right to engage a seat for the same at five dollars, and to employ a taxicab in going. One as a natural man has a perfect right, if he is able, to any of these things, which are not sinful in themselves. Things that are sinful should, of course, always be avoided.

But when one undertakes to become a follower of Christ, he accepts instead of his own will the will of God. And as Christ pleased not Himself, but used His time, His influence, His life, for the good of others, so those who become His disciples will forego their rights and privileges, whenever these would conflict with their service to God. The Christian could not reason the same as he did before he made his consecration. He could not say, I will spend five dollars to go to the opera; but he will be obliged to say, My means are consecrated to the Lord. The same principle will control his judgment as to whether he shall have an automobile or not; whether he shall have a fine house or shall own any house; whether he shall have the finest food; whether he shall wear fine clothing, or plainer clothing, etc. It will control his judgment as to his use of consecrated time.

But no one is to judge another in regard to the use of money or time in his possession as the Lord's steward. It is for the individual himself to decide how he will use these. And it is the Lord who will decide whether he has been a faithful steward or an unfaithful one. The Lord will decide that those who, like Jesus, shall sacrifice the enjoyable earthly things, that thereby they may the better glorify God, shall have the more than compensating spiritual blessings, and shall receive the reward of the Kingdom and its positions of honor.—Z. '15:93.

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Undoubtedly wonderful times are immediately ahead of us. It behooves all those who have been blessed of the Lord with the opening of the eyes of their understanding to walk very faithfully.—Z. '11:19.

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As the Israelites re-affirmed their decision to be faithful to the Lord so let us Spiritual Israelites engrave deeply upon our hearts our consecration, and let us frequently revive and review that consecration that the cares of life do not obliterate it to any degree.—Z. '02:315.

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The natural tendency of man is selfish; he is inclined to do many things from a motive of self-interest. When he becomes a New Creature in Christ he finds this natural tendency warring against the new mind. If we find ourselves inclined to yield to selfish desires and to have our own way, unmindful of the rights and privileges of others, we may know that our faith is being severely tested; and according as we govern ourselves shall we come forth from the fiery test. The antithesis of selfishness is love, which is an unselfish desire to do good to others. Selfishness is the fruit of the mind of the flesh, while love is the fruit of the Spirit.—Z. '17:181.

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We have need of every provision that He has made for us.—Z. '15:243.

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Is it any wonder that the Apostle urges the Lord's faithful ones to set their affections on things above and not on things on earth? Surely not! It was his duty to remind us of the danger along this line and our duty to remind ourselves continually and to remind each other of the necessity for setting, fixing our affections, our minds, our hearts, more and more firmly on the heavenly things. It is with this in view that the Scriptures have been provided us as a guide to our new minds, and the throne of grace has been opened to us that we may come there, too, and obtain mercy and find grace to help in every time of need. And the same gracious Provider has in these days given to the household of faith still further meat in due season whereby we may be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. At a time when earthly things are more attractive, more seductive than ever before in the world's history, the Lord opens before his faithful ones still clearer views of the heavenly crown, heavenly glories, honors and privileges and blessings, that they thus may give the strength to the new mind which will offset the seductive influences affecting us through the flesh.—Z. '07:4.

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Each of the saints, however humble, is greatly loved of our Lord Jesus; and therefore all of the children of God should take heed how they treat even the least of His little ones—their brethren.—Z. '15:291.

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Let us remember that there are various secret ways, as well as the more outward ones, in which we may betray our Lord and His brethren.—Z. '17:155.

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The Apostle in speaking of love as respects the Church assures us that if we would be pleasing to the Lord we must develop this grace richly. Those who possess this quality in goodly measure will not be easily provoked to anger. Those who possess little love will be easily angered. The love which the Lord appreciates is long-suffering. This does not mean that there would not be proper occasions for anger in God's people. There should be a feeling of righteous indignation when we see injustice. Why? Because injustice is wrong. God is angry with injustice; and so God's people should have no sympathy with injustice in any form. If the Lord's people do not cultivate the quality of justice, they will get into that attitude where they will not appreciate justice at all.—Z. '16:325.

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Every true Christian, that is every believer in the atonement, secured by the precious blood, who has consecrated his all to his Savior and is striving daily even though stumblingly to walk in his steps, has a duty toward the visible Church—toward the fellow-members of the Church of Christ.—Z. '05:164.

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"No soldier on service entangleth himself in the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enrolled him as a soldier. And also if a man contend in the games, he is not crowned except he have contended lawfully." "Know ye not that they who run in a race all run, but one receiveth the prize? So run that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible crown. I, therefore, so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one beateth the air; but I keep my body under and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."—2 Tim. 2:4, 5; 1 Cor. 9:24-27.

These earnest exhortations of the faithful Apostle to the Gentiles were most clearly illustrated in his noble course of life. He shunned no danger, shrank from no labor or reproach or privation, and bravely and cheerfully endured hardness and suffered the loss of all things temporal that he might win Christ and be approved of him. As we look upon such a course and consider the fortitude and the strength of character necessary so to run, we may well conclude, that, except we be similarly supplied with the help of divine grace, we shall not be able to persevere to the end.

Paul sped along in that race, not in his own strength, but in the strength which God supplied. And the promise of such aid is none the less ours than it was his. The divine grace is imparted to us through the exceeding great and precious promises of God inspiring us with new and glorious hopes beyond the wreck and ruin of the present order of things. Permitting our minds to dwell upon these we see in the now rapidly approaching dawn of the day of Christ a new heavens and a new earth; and by faith we sit together with Christ in the heavenly places of glory and honor, and together with him are crowned with immortality. By faith we see also the blessed privileges of such an exalted station, and the divinely appointed work in which we will be engaged together with Christ.—Z. '02:264.

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As we follow the Lord's directions we get one blessing after another.—Z. '05:76.

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The Christian whose heart is full of the Lord's spirit of love will not only be careful that he may set a good example before the brethren, lest they should be stumbled, but he will also be careful of the example which he sets to his own sons and household, and to all "them who are without"—those who have not accepted the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, but who are reading the lives and characters of his disciples, as living epistles of his doctrines.—Z. '97:235.

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The precious Truth is God's message to you, not man's. No such high and glorious hope could ever have entered the mind of mortal man, had not God revealed it by his spirit, as he has done through faith in his Word, in his own due time. It is all in that Word. Search and see for yourselves; and be not faithless but believing. It comes not to you on the miserable authority of vain imagination, or dreams, or doubtful visions, but on the authority of God's most holy and authentic Word. True, it is almost too good to believe, but is it not just like our God? Does it not gloriously illustrate the breadth of his mighty mind, the scope of his marvelous wisdom and power, and the depth of his love and grace.—Z. '91:118.

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A. WINTON

Old Corn Gems

NUMBER EIGHTY-SIX

"And they did eat of the OLD CORN of the land on the morrow after the Passover . . . and the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the OLD CORN of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year." Joshua 5:11-12.

A SAFE RULE

"WHERE A BROTHER GIVES AN INTERPRETATION OF A SCRIPTURE WHICH DIFFERS FROM THAT GIVEN BY BROTHER RUSSELL, AND BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION SEEMS REASONABLE AND IN HARMONY WITH THE PLAN OF GOD, THEN WE BELIEVE IT A SAFE RULE TO FOLLOW BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION, FOR THE REASON THAT HE IS THE SERVANT OF THE CHURCH, SO CONSTITUTED BY THE LORD FOR THE LAODICEAN PERIOD; AND THEREFORE WE SHOULD EXPECT THE LORD TO TEACH US THROUGH HIM. WHERE THERE ARISES A DOUBT IN THE MIND AS TO WHICH INTERPRETATION IS CORRECT, THEN IT IS ALWAYS SAFER TO RESOLVE THAT DOUBT IN FAVOR OF BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION. WE BELIEVE SUCH TO BE IN HARMONY WITH THE LORD'S WILL." Z. '18:51.

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"Walk Honestly as in the Day"

Golden Text:—"Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ."—Rom. 13:14.

THIS is a temperance lesson, and an excellent one. It inculcates temperance in respect to every thought, word and act of the consecrated Christian. It opens with a delineation of the Divine Law, showing its comprehensive character—that it relates to all of life's affairs. "Owe no man anything, but to love one another." We can never discharge that obligation. It is upon us every day and every hour of life and enters into all of life's interests. Other debts or obligations we may meet and be through with, but this **debt of love,** the essence of Divine command, is our obligation toward God, toward the Church, toward our families, toward all men, even our enemies. Why? Because, "He that loveth his neighbor has fulfilled the law." No wonder no Jew could keep the Law! No wonder no Gentiles would try to keep it!

No wonder the Scriptures suggest the keeping of the Law of love only to Christians—to those begotten of the holy Spirit and thus have the assistance of the grace of God in daily living, as well as the mercy of God in Christ to cover all of their imperfections, all of their unintentional shortcomings. But it is expected of these consecrated ones that they will keep that Law. Whoever comes short of it **in spirit,** in heart intention, is unfit for the Kingdom, and will not be of the "little flock." More than this, if he comes short of this standard of heart intention he cannot be in the "great company" either, for God has not provided eternal life for any except such as shall now attain to this condition of love in the heart, the will or intention; and during the Millennial Age only to those who shall attain perfect love actually.

"Love Thy Neighbor as Thyself"

plain

The Apostle next enumerates some of the perspicuous commandments—the one against adultery, the one against murder, the one against theft, the one against false witness, the one against covetousness. All of these commands presuppose a fallen condition of mind, out of harmony with God—a **selfish heart.** Is it not selfishness that leads any to covet the things which belong to another? Is it not selfishness, the opposite of love, that leads to false witnessing? Is it not selfishness, the opposite of love, that leads to theft. Is it not selfishness that lies back of murder and adultery—self-love, self-gratification? And the essence of all the other commands is Love, the same love to our neighbor that we have for ourselves, the same desire for his welfare, his prosperity, his happiness, his health, etc. Whoever, therefore, attains to this position of full consecration to God, a begetting of the holy Spirit, has before him this great lesson—to learn to love his neighbor as himself.

Well does the Apostle add, "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor,"no injury of any sort. Love would prompt us to be as careful of the health of our neighbor as of our own, as careful of his reputation as of our own, as careful of his property as of our own, as careful of his feelings as of our own. What a wonderful world it will be when the Kingdom of God's dear Son in the Millennial Age shall have brought all mankind back, mentally, morally and physically, to the original perfection of human nature, in the image and likeness of the God of Love—having destroyed all refusing to co-operate!

"It Is High Time to Awake"

We must bear in memory that the Apostle was addressing Christians in whom the new life had been begun.. His language implies what we know is very frequently the case, namely, that after the early Christian experience of turning from sin to righteousness, from ignorance and superstition to faith and knowledge, and from the feelings of the stranger to a realization of adoption and membership in the family of God, there comes later to some a measure of carelessness, drowsiness. A spirit of the world comes in and threatens to overwhelm the New Creature. The beautiful truths lose some of their freshness, crispness, beauty and flavor. Something **new** is looked for, and is provided by the Adversary, along the lines of more or less self-gratification in earthly things.

The strenuosity of the new experience reacts and spiritual lethargy comes on. The experience of realizing sins forgiven and ourselves adopted into the family of God and the necessity for learning the lessons of the School of Christ is considerably forgotten. Some such occasionally cry out, "Where is the blessedness I knew when first I knew the Lord? Where is the soul-refreshing view of Jesus and his Word?" Such a cry implies an awakening of the kind which the Apostle wished to encourage. In other words, in this lesson he says, "Knowing the time that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us, therefore, cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light." The thought here evidently is a double one:—

(1) We who have accepted Christ should be awake. Each day and week and month and year should find us more awake and more zealous and more appreciative of our wonderful privileges. Our salvation, our resurrection "change," is surely nearing day by day.

(2) From whatever standpoint we view the matter it must be that the night-time of sin is far spent. It must be that the morning of the new dispensation is near. The Apostle wrote after four thousand years had passed and when the fifth was under way. We live when the entire six thousand-year days are in the past and the seventh, the Millennium of promise, is chronologically already begun.

From both standpoints, with both arguments, it is proper for us to cast off the works of darkness and everything pertaining to sin and error and to put on the armor of light to prepare us for the duties of the new day, the morning light of which shines now.

The exhortation of the Apostle is as appropriate today as it was when written, and we urge its forcefulness upon all. In our estimation the Lord has sent to his people in the present time the exhortation of the Vow we have suggested to wake them up. One dear brother recently said to us, "I have already told you of my ungodly life, before the Truth reached me. When I accepted the Truth and made my full consecration to the Lord I experienced a blessing of great joy and peace. Afterwards I lost this joyful feeling in considerable measure. At first the loss of it distressed me. I sought it carefully, but found it not. I am more pleased to tell you that since I took that Vow and brought my original Vow of consecration up to date, as it were—since then the joy has returned to me and I have ever precious fellowship and communion with my Lord. I am striving to continue in this relationship and not to 'grieve the holy Spirit, whereby I am sealed, unto the day of redemption.'" We believe that this is the experience of a great many and the lesson for us is not far to seek. Any endeavor to draw near to the Lord by the renunciation of hindrances and the making of straight paths for our feet must surely bring a blessing.

"Honestly as in the Day"

The word here rendered "honestly" might more properly be translated becomingly, in harmony with our faith, our hope, our appreciation of the Lord, our appreciation of the morning light. By way of contrast the Apostle stipulates certain things as belonging to the night which would be unbecoming to us, not only in their grosser sense, but also in the more refined. Live not in intoxication. Surely it would be unbecoming for any saint to become literally intoxicated at a banquet or a revel, but surely, also, there is a more refined sort of reveling and intoxication. One can become intoxicated with a revel in pleasure of any kind, in automobiling, in golfing, cricketing or social whirl. The true Christian must recognize all of these as things that do not belong to the morning of the new dispensation, things that are incompatible with the light of Present Truth, which show us where we stand at the opening of a new dispensation and what wonderful possibilities arise for the sacrificing of the present life and for the attainment of the glories of the Kingdom.

As Christians we should not walk (live) in chambering (unlawful intercourse), wantonness (self-gratification). These experiences apply to some in a gross sense, but to others surely in their refined sense. There is no fellowship or communion between light and darkness on any plane, because the two are opposites. Any intercourse, therefore, with things of darkness, the things of sin, the things occult, the things that are not in fullest harmony with the Lord are an unwarranted, unlawful intercourse or fellowship. Likewise wantonness (selfishness) may apply to a refined kind of selfishness (self-gratification), pampering of appetites and failure to sacrifice earthly pleasures, in harmony with our consecration Vow to engage in the service of the Lord, the Truth and the brethren; or in doing good to all with whom we come in contact and have opportunity.

The Christian should not live (walk) in strife and envying. Here again a coarse and a refined thought may be apparent. To the world the strife may be understood grossly to mean fisticuffs and physical encounters and such bitter jealousies as would lead to evil deeds and murder, actual or in the heart; or we could apply these injunctions in a more refined way to saints as an exhortation that our lives be not strifeful, but that we follow peace, seek to promote the interests of peace everywhere—in our own home, in our neighborhood, amongst the Lord's people far and near. "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." Envyings, jealousies, alas, in a refined sense, are to be found with nearly all mankind. Often unrecognized by the New Creature, jealousy is a fruitful source of much injury in the Church, which is the Body of Christ. No other evil quality can lead to more harm to ourselves and others than envy, jealousy. We are to put off all these things.

"Put Ye on the Lord Jesus Christ"

Here we have the thought. Our hearts are already consecrated to the Lord. We are already adopted into his family by the begetting of his holy Spirit. But our flesh is not perfect and it continues to love many of the garments of the old nature, which we are to put off. Gradually we are to substitute the new clothing, the livery of heaven, by which all may know us outwardly as well as know us by profession to be children of God, brethren of Christ, "heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord."

Putting on the Lord Jesus is not the work of a moment, nor of an hour, nor of a month, nor of a year; it is the work of a life time. But unless it be begun it will never be completed. And indeed we may be sure that we can never fully put on Christ's characteristics. However, the Lord will see our endeavor, our strenuous fighting to put off the old nature, to put off the works of the flesh and to be clothed with the garments of righteousness, suitable to our relationship to him—the livery, the clothing, that will make us separate from the world, sanctified to God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

"Make No Provision for the Flesh"

Ah, here we have an important point to be remembered. . . . When as New Creatures we made full consecration to the Lord and surrendered all the rights of the human nature our flesh did not agree to the contract, but protested. Subsequently it found it good policy to reason with the New Creature quietly, calmly, urging moderation in righteousness and self-sacrifice—urging, too, that we should not be more extreme than are others; that we should not make ourselves foolish in the estimation of others, lest this bring contempt upon the cause we desire to serve.

Ah, how shrewd, how cunning, how deceitful is the flesh? If we would give heed to its plausible reasoning we would go out of the race altogether, failing to sacrifice, and hence failing to become members of the "royal priesthood," and to share the Kingdom glory of our Redeemer. Occasionally the New Creature wakes up and purposes energetic, thorough-going measures of self-sacrifice in every direction; but the old nature, the flesh, quietly makes its appeal—You must at least reserve thus and so; and, You cannot cut off thus and so entirely; and, it would be monstrous and unjust to yourself to practise self-denial to such an extent. **You must make provision for the flesh!** is its claim. "Make no provision for the flesh," urges the Apostle. And the flesh generally has its own way; for that reason the overcoming self-sacrificers will be but a "little flock," while those who will go into the Second Death or into the "Great Company" will be more numerous.

The question, Shall I make provision for the flesh to fulfil its desires, or, shall I not? should be weighed by every saint. Much depends upon the **decision.** It is at this very juncture that the "Vow to the Lord" which we have been recently advocating as seasonable to all of the "household" of faith is proving a great blessing to many. It is helping them to the point of making absolutely **no provision for the flesh to further its desires along any line.** It promises, if possible, more careful inspection than ever of each word and thought and act. It raises barricades at various weak points and thus strengthens the New Creature and confirms its highest resolutions, and it proportionately binds the old nature and mortifies (deadens) it.

The old nature is exceedingly deceitful. It will not admit that it is afraid of the Vow. Rather it will boast that it has no need of it, because it is **already dead.** The difficulty all the time is that the old nature fears to see the New Creature shut and permanently bar every door to its liberties. It urges that if the New Creature makes no provision for the flesh, it should not at least make such strenuous provision **against the flesh** and its liberties. Let us hearken to the voice of the Lord through the Apostle and close every avenue whereby the flesh might attack us in a moment of weakness or inattention. Let us throw out the pickets of prayer and watchfulness against every thought and word and act not in fullest harmony with the Spirit of our Lord. Let us thus by the aid of the Vow put on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh to fulfil its desires.—Z. '09:150-152.

The Heights and Depths of Divine Law

"Whosoever therefore shall break one of the least of these commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven."—Matthew 5:19.

THERE is prevalent amongst Christian people quite an erroneous view respecting the Divine Law. It is generally considered that, because the Apostle said that we are not under the Law, but under grace, he meant that the Law is done away with. We believe that this thought is incorrect. Our Lord said that till Heaven and earth pass away, not one jot or title of the Law should pass away till all be fulfilled. All written therein shall be accomplished.

The Divine Law has always been in existence. It was plainly expressed in Adam; the various parts of his organism were expressions of the Divine law. The Law of God was written in his heart. He was in full harmony with the Divine **Mind,** and therefore in full harmony with the Divine **Law.** But when sin came in, the Divine Law in his being was measurably obliterated. There is still **some** of the Divine Law in all who are appreciative of right and wrong, but not **sufficient** to make right living possible.

In God's dealing with the nation of Israel He gave them a Law. This Law, written in the Ten Commandments, is a brief summary of man's obligations—a text, as it were, from which many lessons might be drawn. In our knowledge of the Ten Commandments, we are still aware of what is God's Law. God never abrogated that Law. It is still in force upon the Jews, as also is the Law Covenant. **But Gentiles** never were under the Law Covenant.

God offered the Jews everlasting life if they would keep the Law. They were bound by the Law; hence the Apostle points out that they would need first to **die** to the Law Covenant before they could come into Christ, the Life-Giver. (Rom. 7:4.) This did not mean that they must die to the **Law of God,** but merely to the **Law Covenant.** It would mean to give up all hope of attaining everlasting life through keeping the Law Covenant.

The new hope into which Gentile Christians entered does not abrogate God's Law, nor does it release them from the obligations of His Law. But God has made a provision that notwithstanding our imperfection, our inability to keep the Law perfectly, He will accept us in Christ, our imperfections being covered by Christ's merit. Of these the Apostle said, "The righteousness of the Law is fulfilled in us, who walk, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." We must needs be perfect beings to live up to the spirit of the Divine Law, it being the requirement for a **perfect man.**

Perfection the Christian's Standard

This thought, then, is the key to our Lord's words in the text under consideration. He who would violate this Law of God, and teach others to do so, either by example or precept, should be considered as the least. And he that would keep the Law of God, and by example or precept help others to keep this Law, should be called greatest in the Church, the incipient Kingdom, the embryotic Kingdom. Those who would be of this Kingdom class must forsake father and mother and all things to take up their cross and follow Christ. In other words, Christ must be **first.** Amongst these followers of His there would be differences. Some through weaknesses of heredity, or what not, would be less faithful—others would be more faithful. Those who would keep the Divine Law, most perfectly in heart and life would be most nearly copies of God's dear Son.

And so it is with us today. We esteem highly those most diligent in service, those most zealous. Those who walk somewhat disorderly, who are vacillating, we esteem less. We take notice of ignorance and weaknesses in the Church. We must **sympathize** with these; nevertheless, one who would not overcome his weaknesses would not be so highly esteemed in the Kingdom class as one who **could,** and who **would,** walk more closely in the Master's footsteps. In other words, we understand the Master to be teaching that the Gospel is not out of sympathy with the Jewish Law. He said, "Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect." There is no lower standard than that of **perfection.** It would not do for the Lord to say, Be ye slightly like the Father, or, Be ye nearly like Him. He must present the **perfect** standard.

The Jew is striving for perfection, striving to get everlasting life. The Christian is striving for perfection, and expecting to get eternal life—not by perfectly keeping the Law, which he cannot do, but through the merit of Christ, which makes up for his deficiencies—covers his blemishes.

The Outer Shell of Deeper Sentiments

The Divine Law is briefly summed up, not only in the Old Testament, but also by our Lord Himself in the words, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. And thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." (Deut. 6:5; Lev. 19:18; Matt. 22:37-39.) This is still more briefly summed up by the Apostle Paul: "Love is the fulfilling of the Law." (Rom. 13:10.) Love to God would lead us to do all those things which are inculcated in His Word; and love for our neighbor would lead us to fulfil all our obligations toward them, as inculcated.

If we come to apply the commands of the law to ourselves as Christians, we can easily amplify them all. For instance, our Lord's definition of **adultery** is much more searching than the statement as contained in the tables of the Law. The New Testament definition of **murder** is much deeper than that commonly accepted. The Apostle John declared that to **hate** a brother is **murder.** God could see that there was murder in the heart of the hater of a brother. The All-Seeing Eye perceives if there is disloyalty present in any degree—or anything contrary to the Divine will. From this standpoint, then, we see that the Ten Commandments are but the **outer shell,** as it were, of deeper sentiments.

It was the custom of the Jews to do nothing whatsoever on the seventh day of the week. We presume that the significance of this commandment is, to the New Creature in Christ, that the rest of the seventh day typifies the perfect rest into which he has entered through Christ.

All New Creatures in Christ are to keep **Sabbath** every day. And so the Apostle says, "We who have believed do enter into rest"—have entered into rest. It is not that our muscles or our brains are necessarily resting, but that we have the rest of heart, the rest of mind, the peace of God which passeth all understanding. It is important that we maintain this peace at all times, and do not let anything come in which would interfere with it and take us out of harmony with God. If it does, we should consider that we have broken the Sabbath command.

The New Creature could not **kill.** It has no weapon except the Sword of the Spirit. Whoever hates his brother is a **murderer.** To cultivate a spirit of hatred would be a **very serious matter.** One who would do so should not be considered a true brother or sister in the Body of Christ, which is the Church.—Z. '13:360, 361.

"Light Afflictions" Here—"Glory to Follow"

"We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our body."—2 Corinthians 4:8-10.

THE Apostle Paul is here addressing the Church at Corinth, and in the larger sense addressing the entire Church of the Gospel Age. He is apparently describing to some extent the experiences of himself and those who were with him in his missionary labors. He traveled from place to place; . . . sometimes he spent an entire year, sometimes more than a year, in one city. Nevertheless, he was a traveler, going about where other missionaries of the Lord had not gone, addressing the Jews and whoever else might give evidence of having a hearing ear. On these tours he took with him assistants. We are therefore to consider that his words here referred not only to the Apostles (for he was the only Apostle of the company), but also to the others with him; and that this Epistle, as are all the inspired writings, was designed by the Lord for the instruction and benefit of all the saints throughout the Christian Dispensation.

The Apostle's assistants were general ministers of the Lord, as are all God's children in proportion as they do a work of ministry. His words would seemingly be addressed, then, to all who are engaged in the Lord's service. In this Epistle he points out that there are differences in the services rendered—"He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully"—and also differences in the experiences of the various members of the Body of Christ. He says that some of them had been the objects of persecution and that others had shared in those persecutions by suffering with those so persecuted, indicating that the Lord recognizes and appreciates this association with those in distress, if there be such association.

This thought is brought out also in St. Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews. (Chapter 10:32-34.) If those not so actively engaged in the service are faithfully doing all that their hands find to do, the Lord is as appreciative of it as He is of those who because of greater ability or physical strength or opportunities are able to accomplish more—each doing to the extent of his opportunity the work of the Lord.

The Apostle said of himself and his companions, and of all those laboring faithfully in the service of the Master, "We are troubled on every side." There are many troubles that are common to the whole human family—lack of employment, sickness, death, poverty, etc. There are multitudinous troubles which come to the world; and of course the Apostle and his companions were subject to these difficulties like other men. To many these trials of life bring distress. But while St. Paul and those with him had their ailments and difficulties, their persecutions and trials, they also had the knowledge of the Truth and the Lord's sustaining grace; and they were enlisted in the army of the King of kings. They were not distressed by their troubles, but were trusting in the Lord's precious promises that these should all work out for their good.

"As He Was, So Are We, in This World"

And so we are not to allow the troubles of life to distress us as they distress other people. We have something that others do not have—the Lord's assurance that everything in our lives shall be a bearer of blessing to us if we are faithful. This enables us to rejoice in tribulation, if we really believe this promise of our Father's Word. There are other troubles that come to the Lord's people, but do not come to the world. . . .

Our Death the Gateway to Life

"We are perplexed, but not in despair," says St. Paul. The Apostle and his company were not the only ones who have been at a loss to know just what to do. The whole world have been perplexed, and are particularly so today. The general anxious uncertainty of our day results in a large measure, it would seem, from the nerve-racking experiences of the present time. If people knew the right thing to do in respect to their business, their homes and their affairs in general, they would not be so full of doubt and bewilderment. But no one is wise enough to get along without some perplexity; and present conditions in the world are causing much distress and also anxious foreboding for the near future. Those who are engaged in the work of the Lord have some perplexity. But the anxiety or uncertainty of the Lord's people should never go to the length of despair. Those who are of the world, getting out of work and being in various difficulties, become very despondent. Frequently we hear of suicides. Things look very dark to people who take their own life.

It may yet be true of the Lord's people that things will look very dark; but they are not in despair, and will not be in despair whatever may come; for the Lord has said that He will never leave us nor forsake us. This gracious promise should give us a hope sure and steadfast. Our anchor of hope should hold. Our position, therefore, is very different from that of the world, who have no particular hope. The world have no solid anchor, no precious promises to hold them fast. We know that if the worst comes to the worst, if we should even die of starvation, our hope lies beyond the Veil, beyond death. Therefore God's saints of today look upon death as the gateway by which to enter into fulness of life, into a realization of all our hopes and joys. If, therefore, there is despair, it would prove that our anchorage has been cut loose. Whoever would find that he is in despair would find that he is letting go his faith, and should immediately seek counsel from the Word of God and from others strong in faith, and should go to the Lord in frequent and earnest prayer, assured that if faith is restored despair will go.

"I Will Never Leave Thee"

"We are persecuted, but not forsaken." There are persecutions of certain kinds that come to those in the world. Sometimes their neighbors have a grudge against them, and they thus are more or less persecuted. But they have no effective means of dealing with such a matter and nothing to comfort them. Sometimes they give as good as they get. But in the case of one of the Lord's children it is very different. When we feel that justice calls for retaliation, then we should remember that it is not ours to retaliate, to return evil for evil. The Lord has told us that we should leave all matters relating to justice in His hands. "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay, saith the Lord." . . .

But though persecuted for righteousness' sake, the Lord's people are not forsaken. The world and those possessing the world's spirit may harass and buffet them, but the Lord does not forsake them. When persecutions come to us, however, we are to inquire, "Are these oppositions and persecutions coming to me on account of my loyalty to the Lord, or is it that there is something in my disposition which causes them?" If the latter is the case, we should diligently endeavor to rectify our fault. If, on the other hand, we find by careful scrutiny of ourselves and our conduct that we have been doing our best, our very best, and that the persecutions are coming to us on this account, then we are to rejoice in the persecution.

We are "cast down, but not destroyed." This expression shows that while the Apostle and his companions did not suffer despair, did not feel forsaken, they sometimes felt a heaviness of spirit. This heaviness of spirit, or feeling of loneliness and depression, is natural at times to all mankind under the adverse conditions prevailing in the world. The weight of this casting down may be accentuated to some extent by the condition of the physical health. Those who are weak or in pain physically are apt to feel any mental pressure or trouble. This is all to be fought against in the Christian; for we know that our afflictions and disabilities are something outside and not of the Lord, except in the sense that He permits them for our development, for our future work in the Kingdom. We are therefore to be of good courage. If the Lord permits us to have trouble, we are to exercise fortitude, to patiently endure, and not to allow it to destroy our faith or our happiness or our loyalty of spirit to Him to whom we have vowed allegiance.

We are to put up with whatever our Father permits, in sweetness of temper, and to say to ourselves, "This may be a good lesson to me. Perhaps these cast-down feelings, this feeling of desolation, may help me to sympathize more with others." The poet has truly said:

> "Into each life some rain must fall,
> Some days must be dark and dreary."

So let us see to it that we do not allow this feeling of depression to conquer us and to destroy our faith and energy; but rather, looking to the Lord for assisting grace, and claiming His precious promises, we are to rise above the difficulty and press bravely onward.

Our "Covenant by Sacrifice"

We are "always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus." The Apostle thus declares that the Lord's people, in proportion as they are faithful in His service, have a likeness to the Lord in their service, in their death. Our Lord's experience in the narrow way was three and a half years of dying. He was daily laying down His life—surrendering His life. He was an Example to us of how we should surrender our lives. He laid down His life, not in the service of the world, but of the Lord's professed people. While the merit of His sacrificed life was to be used of the Lord for the life of the world, yet He laid it down in the direct service of His Jewish brethren.

The Hebrew people were the people of God. Our Lord spent His life especially with those who were truly desirous of pleasing God and knowing His will, whether found amongst the rich and influential or amongst the poor and lowly. Jesus welcomed publicans and sinners, and gave His life for them. He knew that among this humble class He would find the greater proportion of true wheat. He was laying down His life during all the three and a half years of His earthly ministry, and merely completed this work at Calvary.

And so it is with all of the Lord's true people. They have made "a covenant by sacrifice." They have consecrated, dedicated their lives to the Lord and His service; and as Jesus their Master laid down His life in doing good, in proclaiming the Truth then due, so they are to lay down their lives in the same manner, whether the time of their ministry be three and a half years or twenty years or whatever it may be—until the Father's good time shall come for their deliverance. They will be in full harmony with the Lord and will gladly have fellowship in the sufferings of their great Head—and properly so; for they are prospective members of His Body. Thus all of these members are continually bearing about in the body the dying of their Lord. They are dying daily as He died, "laying down their lives."

"Therefore Glorify God in Your Body"

This is all the work of the New Creature. The old creature is merely compelled to follow in the way of the New Creature, and this setting aside of the will of the flesh is the basic feature of our dying. When our dying has been completed, our lives faithfully laid down, it will bring us to that condition where we shall hear the Master's "Well done!"

St. Paul also says that "the life of Jesus" is to be "made manifest in our body." We understand him here to be referring to the human body. The New Creature owns this body. With the people of the world there are not two personalities, but merely the one creature. This duality of personality is applicable only to those who have been begotten of the Holy Spirit. The old body is suffering; but the New Creature rejoices, glad to be in the service—gives thanks to God day by day respecting its tribulations, knowing that these are working out "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

Thus the life of Jesus is manifested through us to the world, and to the brethren. The world cannot understand. They say, "If I were in your place, in such a trial, I would be miserable. But you are rejoicing!" So they cannot understand. But we have a newness of life that the world cannot appreciate. All who can appreciate this should daily grow in grace and knowledge. We should show forth more and more of the Lord's life in our characters and in our bodies. Thus we shall be manifesting more and still more of the Lord's Spirit, doing more of the Lord's work, becoming more like Jesus—all of which will prepare us for the glory beyond, when the New Creature shall be completed, when all the perfections and glories of the new nature will be ours.—Z. '15:120-122.

How Righteous Character Is Produced

OUR WILL REPRESENTS our choice, but our choice is made up largely of our impressions and our judgment—or mis-judgment—of things surrounding us. As a child will reach for a finely polished razor or for a light and be cut or burned, so our wills sometimes grasp for things that are not good for us. From the time that we first heard the Lord's voice, therefore, the education of our wills has progressed; for all are defective in their choice, in their views of matters, and in their manner of thinking.

Our soundness of mind increases with our knowledge of the Divine Plan and of the character of our Lord. When we think of His perfection as the Logos and as the Man Christ Jesus, we are enabled to realize somewhat our own imperfection, and we thenceforth seek to eliminate those things which belong to our imperfect judgment. We recall that He was "holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners"—that He was perfect; and we realize, that having a consecrated mind, He entered the "narrow way" with a right will and a balanced mind, which would be accentuated by His experiences in life. With His perfect example before us, we seek daily to train our wills in harmony with the Divine will.

The will is the result of a certain combination of mental qualities, or faculties. We may, therefore, change our wills in various ways by having divers combinations of the mental qualities; for instance, one quality of the mind is called acquisitiveness—a desire to get, to control. Another quality of the mind has respect to justice, another to music, another to art, and so on.

If the quality of justice be small or if it be dormant, a person of large acquisitiveness might be led to steal. He would have no quality of justice to tell him that this act is wrong. Some one might be tempted to take money, or one might be willing to do something dishonorable to gratify love for music or what not. On the contrary, if one has a large organ of justice, it would control him. If this faculty were thoroughly awakened and brought into exercise, he would say, "No, it is wrong to steal. In this matter there are principles to be regarded." Thus his desire is not gratified at the expense of principle.

One's will is made up of the organs which control his conduct. If the selfish propensities rule, he will be selfish. In some people the organ of conscientiousness seems to be dormant. Along some lines these people act just as an animal would—without thought as to either their own motives or the effect that their actions will have upon others. If such people should at any time give their hearts to the Lord in consecration, their attention is sure to be called, sooner or later, to their manner of living. If they consult the Word of God for instruction, the Scriptures tell them that God is not pleased with their conduct. As a result of this information, they begin to learn to scrutinize their thoughts and words and doings, and in due time to change their ways.

Conscientiousness Gives Strength of Character

A person who has large veneration, large spirituality and large conscientiousness has great advantage over one who has small veneration, or small spirituality or small conscientiousness, for as different matters come up, these three faculties naturally agree and say, "This is right" (or wrong, as the case may be). When the thing seems right, judgment would say, "This is a proper thing." This kind of people can be martyrs for anything that they believe is right, for they are strong in three qualities of the mind which give them a force of character for righteousness.

A person who has less conscientiousness would have less of this strength of character. Strong will exerted in any direction produces strong character; bad will, bad character; good will, good character. We are to some extent what we are by birth. After our consecration God instructs us and we are so transformed by the renewing of our minds that we have our minds made up to do right instead of wrong. This making up of the mind is the formation of will.

We should strive to have strong will, strong character, and should put away everything that would be likely to weaken our character. One who builds strong character reasons out what he thinks is God's will—what he thinks is the right thing to do. Then he determines to do that thing and resolves to let nothing interfere with the accomplishment of his purpose. Whoever has a good, strong will has something to help him over every trial and difficulty in life.—Z. '13:10, 11.

The New Covenant

"Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a New Covenant with the House of Israel, and with the House of Judah."—Jeremiah 31:31.

THE New Covenant is the Scriptural name for the new arrangement between God and man, by which God purposes to receive mankind into harmony again with Himself. Harmony with God was the covenant relationship which Adam originally enjoyed, but which he lost by His disobedience, and which was renewed typically at Mt. Sinai with Israel, although they could not get the blessing of life out of it.

The mediation of the Law Covenant was effected through Moses. (Exodus 19:3-9; 24:3-8.) God agreed that if Israel would keep His Law they should have everlasting life. The inauguration of that Law Covenant was effected by the mediator, Moses, through the sacrifices which he offered. In the typical arrangement of the old Law Covenant, these Atonement Day sacrifices were repeated year by year continually.

While the mediation of the old Law Covenant brought Israel into typical relationship to God, the mediation of the New Law Covenant will bring all mankind into actual Covenant relationship, into a position of Divine favor, provided that they will continue to keep the Divine Law. God will introduce this New Law Covenant through the Mediator of the New Covenant, in whom the whole arrangement centers, and through whom it will be carried out. For a period of one thousand years this Mediator will do a work for mankind. As a priest, He will uplift humanity; as a King, He will rule them in righteousness. It will take a full thousand years to bring the people out of their degradation, and restore them to the image and likeness of God, lost by Adam in Eden.

The basis of mediation on the part of the better Mediator will be the better sacrifices of this Gospel Age. In the antitypical arrangement these sacrifices will never be repeated. Through the better sacrifices, the antitypical Mediator will have the power to start the people with a **clean slate,** as it were. So it is written, "Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." (Hebrews 8:12.) Again, "I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh."—Ezekiel 36:26.

Thus Adam's sin and condemnation, which came to mankind by heredity, will no more be remembered by anybody. But the work of taking away the stony heart will be gradual. The disciplinary processes of the Kingdom will gradually relieve mankind of hard-heartedness, and make them tender-hearted and affectionate. All who enter that new condition of things will no longer be held accountable for Adam's sin. We read in Ezekiel 18:2-4, "The **fathers** have eaten sour grapes, and the children's **teeth** are set on edge." Under the new order of things he who dies will die for **his own sin.**

Since all mankind are in a condition of imperfection, all will still be liable to sin. The only arrangement by which they can attain everlasting life will be by their adoption into the family of the Mediator—The Christ. He will quicken their mortal bodies. No Divine condemnation will hold over against them from the past. Only such as come into this relationship will receive the Divine blessings. Under the New Covenant, the special favors of the Lord will be only for the obedient. Whoever rejects the opportunities for upbuilding will be destroyed from among the people.—Acts 3:23.

Sealing the New Covenant

God cannot enter into a covenant with people who are under His own sentence of death. Therefore, under the typical arrangement of the Law Covenant, the death of bulls and goats was accepted as a sacrifice to God. This did not mean that the blood of bulls and goats was sufficient to take away sin; but that it was a typical representation of the real sacrifices, under the real Covenant.

If the New Covenant were **now sealed,** then all the blood of the Covenant must have been **previously** prepared. If this were **already shed,** then we could have no chance of sharing in the death of Christ. It is evident, then, that the New Covenant is **not sealed.** The antitypical Bullock has been slain, and His blood taken into the Most Holy. The antitypical goat is in process of being slain. When its sacrifice shall have been completed, all of the blood will be in the hands of the great High Priest. Then will come the application of the blood as an offset to Adam's sin. At the end of this Gospel Age the great Mediator will be ready to do the work assigned to Him.

The first work of the New Dispensation will be the antitypical application of the blood in the antitypical Most Holy, upon the Mercy-Seat, to make a reconciliation for the sins of all the people. Until that shall have been done, the New Covenant cannot be inaugurated. Our High Priest has been commissioned to inaugurate the New Covenant. The application of the blood will be the sealing—the making valid.

The New Covenant has been promised for centuries, but it has not yet gone into effect. As soon as this Blood of Atonement shall have been applied for the sins of all the people, the New Covenant will be inaugurated. We see, then, that the blood is to be applied in cancelation of the sins of the **whole world** as an offset for the sin of Adam—which includes his race.

At the beginning of the New Dispensation the world begins life anew, so to speak—not individually, not personally, but collectively, through the Mediator. The merit of the Mediator is to be applied. It is the Mediator who makes satisfaction for the sins of the world; and all the resulting blessings come through the Mediator's hands. Throughout the Millennial Age whoever would have life must get it through the Lifegiver, who will give it under the terms of the New Covenant. (1 John 5:12.) None can get his share of the blessing except by acceptance of the terms of the New Covenant, and by endeavor to live up to them. All who do so will be helped, and granted grace sufficient through the Mediator.

While the sprinkling of the blood upon the Mercy-Seat on behalf of all the people takes place before restitution begins, or before the right to live can be given to any of the Ancient Worthies, nevertheless, those who would get God's blessing, His uplifting influence, must become Israelites—that is, become believers in God, by believing in the Mediator, who will be God's Representative. This Law will be applicable to the whole world. If mankind would get everlasting life, they must accept Christ and join themselves to this earthly Kingdom class. Christ's Kingdom must rule the earth until all the wicked are destroyed.—1 Corinthians 15:24-26.

New Covenant Benefits World-Wide

All mankind will receive some benefit from the New Covenant, irrespective of acceptance of Christ. That benefit will be that they will be awakened from the tomb. As the Scriptures tell us, as by one man condemnation passed upon all, so likewise through one man justification to life is to pass upon all. (Romans 5:12, 18.) Therefore, we would say that the benefits of the New Covenant will be applicable to everybody. If God had foreseen that nobody would adopt this arrangement, that fact no doubt would have altered His Plan.

All of the accounts against humanity having been canceled by Justice, mankind will be turned over to the Mediator. If man were not put under the Mediator, if he were kept under Divine Justice, he would immediately be condemned, because of his inability to do right. Therefore the Father will not take cognizance of sinners. They will be left to the Mediator. All who will be obedient will receive the blessings of the Kingdom, and those who do not become obedient under those conditions will go into the Second Death.

The Sin Unto Death

During the Gospel Age, the only ones who can commit the sin unto death, blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, are those who have been enlightened of the Holy Spirit. St. Paul says, "As touching those who were once enlightened and tasted of the Heavenly Gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and tasted the good Word of God, and the powers of the Age to come, and then fell away, it is impossible to renew them again into repentance." (Hebrews 6:4-6. R.V.) Their sin would be wilful, otherwise called "blasphemy against the Holy Spirit." . . . We who have been begotten of the Holy Spirit are on trial for life or death. Those who now die the Second Death will have no opportunity in the future. If these begotten of the Holy Spirit are faithful, they will be granted to be of the Little Flock class. Those of the spirit-begotten class who fail to attain a place in the Little Flock, will, if overcomers eventually, receive life on a lower plane. They will be the Great Company. But if they fail to attain either of these positions, the only thing remaining for them is the Second Death.

As for the world, their Day of Judgment has not yet come. The world is still in condemnation through Father Adam—not recognized as having any rights at all. Some of the world are excellent people; but even these have neither part nor lot in the salvation of the present time. The blessed arrangement for them is in the Millennial Age, when all of their sins and iniquities will be forgotten.

Just as our sins are now canceled, so likewise will the whole world go free from the condemnation of sin absolutely, when the world shall have accepted of Christ, the great Mediator.

But they will, nevertheless, suffer certain judgments, or punishments, or stripes, for the deeds of this present life. This will not be because Justice will hold over anything against them, but because the weaknesses of human nature will have left wounds in their flesh. With them also it will be true that if they shall sin against the spirit of holiness, the Holy Spirit, knowingly and wilfully, the penalty will be condemnation to the Second Death.

Our Lord Jesus said that all manner of sin should be forgiven except blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. But the Pharisees, to whom these words were addressed, could not commit this sin, because they had not the fulness of knowledge.—Matthew 12:31, 32.

Forgiveness of Sin Absolute

When God recognizes the satisfaction of Divine Justice and cleans the slate so far as sinners are concerned, this does not mean that He has merely transferred the account to Jesus, who will hold it against them. Our Lord Jesus will not hold against mankind the things which the Father has forgotten. On the contrary, as the Representative of the Father, the Lord will be glad to give mankind the benefit of that forgiveness, merely holding them at a distance from the Father—standing between as Mediator—to give them time for restoration, development of character, etc., taking away the stoniness of their hearts.

The Lord says through the Prophet, "Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." The Apostle Paul calls attention to this statement. He points out that under the Law Covenant this was not done, but that the sins remained; for atonement was made afresh for them year by year: The inferior sacrifices could not take away sin, but the original sins remained. (Hebrews 10:1-4.) This New Covenant in Christ, however, will absolutely take away sins. See Jeremiah 31:31-34; Ezekiel 36:25-29.

Future Rewards and Punishments

The Scriptures tell us that "out of Zion shall go forth the Law, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem." (Isaiah 2:3.) The Ancient Worthies are to be made princes in all the earth. (Psalm 45:16.) This, of course, would appeal first and primarily to the Jew, who would naturally be the first to come under the new regulations. We may not say that all of the Jews will do so, but we believe that a considerable number of them will. In time others will join them. There are many good people who have not taken the vow of consecration to the Lord, but who would like to help rather than to hinder others. Such will in due time attach themselves to the Kingdom, which shall be "the desire of all nations."

In the case of the Ancient Worthies their freedom from imperfection will make them conspicuous. As the world comes to know about these, they will say, Are not these God's people? Mankind will perceive that God has rewarded the Ancient Worthies by giving them a better resurrection, and will learn that their better resurrection was given because of faithfulness in the past.

Covenant Relationship With God Conditional

Christ, having laid down the price of the sins of the whole world, will eventually hand that price over to Justice. The price having been accepted by Justice, the sins of the whole world will be remitted; and everything will be turned over to the great Mediator. After the inauguration of the New Covenant, it will be the part of the people to strive to come up to the requirements of that Covenant; although if they then unwittingly violate God's Law, they will not be amenable to that Law, during the Mediatorial Reign; for the Mediator will stand between them and the Law.

The Mediator will not hold against any one the transgressions of this present life. This does not mean that mankind will have bodies which will give them no trouble; but that under the arrangements of the New Covenant, this better Mediator purposes to help them out of the difficulties that are theirs by reason of their fallen condition. He will help the people to understand the requirements of the New Covenant.

The satisfaction of Justice is necessary before any one can experience Restitution. Even the Ancient Worthies cannot be blessed without this satisfaction of Justice. After the Mediator has made satisfaction to Divine Justice, and has been privileged to inaugurate the New Covenant, the Ancient Worthies will be the first to be blessed under it. They will have in their resurrection complete Restitution to human perfection; for during their lifetime they had this testimony, that they pleased God.—Heb. 11:5.

The Ancient Worthies cannot, of course, enter into the New Covenant arrangement until they shall have been awakened from the sleep of death; therefore, as stated in the foregoing, the claims of Justice must be met before they are awakened. As soon as God will have made the New Covenant with them, these Ancient Worthies will form the nucleus of the earthly phase of the Kingdom. The earthly seed of Abraham will be added to, from all the different families, or nations, of the world.

Covenant relationship with God means perfection. Mankind will be reaching this perfection during the thousand years of Christ's Kingdom. But they will not **enter into it** until the end of the thousand years, when the Mediator will turn them over to God. At the close of that time, they will be privileged to enter into this Covenant relationship with Jehovah. Then they must stand or fall individually. As we read, at the end of the thousand years Satan shall be loosed for a little season; and all that **love unrighteousness** will be deceived by him. The remainder of mankind, having passed their test successfully, will be received into everlasting life. Then they will be in covenant relationship with God —without a Mediator—just as Adam was in covenant relationship with his Creator before sin entered into the world.

The Church Not Under the New Covenant

The Church is not under the New Covenant; therefore it is not proper to speak of the Church as being **blessed by** the New Covenant. But the Church receives a great blessing and privilege **in respect to** the New Covenant. If there were to be no New Covenant, there would be no need of a Mediator, or of the Better Sacrifices whereby it is to be instituted.

St. Paul states that God has made us able ministers of the New Covenant, thus indicating that we have something to do with the **preparation for it.** (2 Corinthians 3:6.) Unless there were Better Sacrifices, there would be **no basis** for that New Covenant. The sufferings which the Church undergo at this present time are a blessed privilege to us; for we are ministers of that New Covenant, in the sense that we are serving it by **training for future service**—after it shall have been inaugurated.

Suppose that there was a great building in process of erection. The men working upon the construction of that building might be said to be greatly benefited by that building—not that they would be benefited in the **future,** when the building is in use, but they are being benefited **during its construction.** So now the Church class receives certain blessings and privileges in connection with the New Covenant. Later, the entire world will be blessed thereby, in a very different way.

During the Gospel Age, God deals merely with the Church, not with the world. There is, however, some resemblance between the blessings of God now coming upon the Church and those coming upon the world by and by. **Then** the Lord will rewrite His Law in the hearts of mankind, as it was originally written in Adam's heart. At the end of the thousand years, all mankind will be fleshly images of God, except those found unworthy and destroyed in the Second Death.

The Church are said to have new hearts **now**—right views of things. In the case of the Church, however, there is not a taking away of the stoniness of heart, but there is a new nature, a **new heart.** This, of course, has something to do with the flesh, since the flesh has something to do with the New Creature. The Law of God is recognized in the flesh, under the compulsion of the New Creature.

Typical Distribution of Blessings

The New Covenant is the blessing which the Church gives to mankind. It is God's Covenant, of course. God promised to arrange this matter; and He has so arranged that it shall go to the world through Christ the Head and the Church, His Body. It is by the Better Sacrifices that the giving to the world of this New Covenant blessing is possible.

If, then, the Church are to **give** these things, they must **first** have **had them.** No man can **give away** what he did not first **possess.** This thought that the New Covenant is a testament, or gift, of Christ to the world is made very prominent in the Scriptures. It is a gift in which the Church shares; for "If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him; if we be dead with Him, we shall live with him"; and all things are ours because we are His.

These things are clearly set forth in the Old Testament types. St. Paul explains that Isaac was the heir of Abraham, and was typical of The Christ. Isaac did not receive his inheritance by a New Covenant, but by the primary, or original, Covenant. This Covenant was not the Law Covenant.

In Micah 4:1-4 we read that in the last days, "the mountain [Kingdom] of the House of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains [kingdoms], and many people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the Mountain of the Lord, and to the House of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths."

The succeeding verses of the chapter show the influence that will be exerted. The blessings and prosperity will then be with those who will be in harmony with God. But now it is different. "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." (2 Timothy 3:12.) They "shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My name's sake." (Matthew 5:11.) These things indicate that those faithful to God during this Age will have more hardship than have those who are unfaithful.

Many of the worldly, even the wicked of the world, have great prosperity at the present time. (The world thinks that we are making our lives miserable by the course which we pursue. But we are not doing this; on the contrary, we are enjoying ourselves and are having a good time. We have much advantage every way.) In the future, God tells us, it will be different. Then, whoever does wickedly shall suffer; and whoever does righteously shall receive blessing. When that time comes, the blessing of Restitution will be of God; and the only way to gain that blessing will be by coming into harmony with the new order of things in the Kingdom of Messiah.—Z. '13:245-248.

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There may be more or less stumbling on the part of the elect, not through weakness of the spirit, the heart, the new mind, but "through manifold temptations" of the flesh, the earthen vessel, in which temporarily resides the new creature, begotten of the spirit, the elect. The Apostle proceeds to give further assurances, saying, "For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." The **elect** will not be received of the Lord with chidings and upbraidings for the imperfections of the flesh, which were unwillingly theirs, but on the contrary all the weaknesses of the flesh will be ignored, and the intents of the heart alone will be judged, and the heart-character formed will alone be tested and approved: and this will determine whether or not we shall stand the Lord's approval and be granted the glorious things which he has promised to them that love him—"glory, honor and immortality" and a share in the Kingdom and its work of blessing.—Z. '00:345, 346.

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Well may the Church arise now and put on her beautiful garments: for very shortly she is to receive beauty for ashes and the oil of joy for the spirit of heaviness. The time is come when she may lift up her head and **rejoice**, knowing that her deliverance draweth nigh. (Luke 21:28.) The exhortation to arise and shine is therefore to all who have been enlightened by the harvest message in these days of the Lord's presence. The prophet tells us that this truth which so fills our hearts with joy and gladness is nothing less than the glory of the Lord which is risen upon us. How blessed the thought, how precious the truth! The humblest saint who has been brought to a knowledge of it, and who has been thrilled with its blessed **inspiration**, may rejoice in the realization that the glory of the Lord has already risen upon him.

Is it indeed true that the glory of the Lord is risen upon this humble one who has to fight hard the fight of faith day by day to keep his mortal body in subjection to the mind of the spirit, and who realizes every moment that he stands only in the imputed righteousness of Christ, his own being but as filthy rags? Yes, it is even so; and the fact that the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee, that it has thrilled thy soul with a joy unspeakable and full of glory even now, is a special evidence of his love and care for thee. And more, it is an earnest or foretaste of that fulness of glory and blessing promised a little further on, if we are faithful to the light we now enjoy; if, with a holy zeal for God, we arise and let it shine—in our words, in our works and in our characters.—Z. '96:220-221.

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Our Lord's words are not one-sided, not directed merely against sin in one class, but His word is sharp, cutting in every direction, and sin is reproved by Him as much when found in His most earnest followers as when found elsewhere. It assures us that none need attempt to pluck out the mote from his brother's eye without first getting rid of the beam in his own eye: and that if we do not show mercy to those who are our debtors we must not expect mercy from Him who has proposed to extend His mercy toward us.

How heart-searching is God's Word when we understand it—not merely as a compendium of rules and regulations, but when we catch the spirit of it!

Then we come to see that its requirement is love out of a pure heart; first, to the Heavenly Father; secondly, to our Lord and Head; thirdly, to all His brethren; fourthly, to the world in general, groaning and travailing in pain, waiting for the blessings of the coming Day of Christ; and fifthly, toward our enemies also, sympathetically realizing that they are warped, twisted and blinded through the deceitfulness of sin and through the machinations of the great Adversary.—2 Corinthians 4:4; Z. '16:345.

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"Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks." (1 Thess. 5:17, 18.) The advanced Christian is to be so fully in accord with the Father and the Son and the divine program, The Plan of the Ages, that his entire life will be a prayer and a song in respect to every affair of life. He will have in his mind primarily, What is the will of God in this matter? "whether we eat or drink or whatsoever we do let us do all to the glory of God." The heart that is thus continually in all of life's affairs looking for divine direction is thus continuously in a prayer attitude, and no other condition is proper to the Christian—"In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths;" "Delight thyself also in the Lord and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart."—Prov. 3:6; Psa. 37:4. But while thus in the prayer attitude continuously we must not neglect the privilege of a more formal approach to the throne of grace—on bended knee, privately and alone. Whoever does not embrace this privilege misses a portion of the great blessing which the Lord has arranged for his benefit and assistance in walking in the narrow way.—Z. '06:204.

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If we were sure that the Body of Christ is now completed (1916), we see no reason why consecration to God should not be symbolized by water baptism; for this rite represents the surrender and burial of the individual will into the will of the Lord, and this is the proper course for every one to take. We could not imagine a different course for all to take during the Millennial Age. The difference will be that the Lord will not accept them then to a change of nature, but to His favor under the restitution privileges of that Dispensation—an uplift to perfect human nature on the earth. . . .

All of the restored world will belong to the general family of Christ. Jesus the Bridegroom and the Church His Bride will have the regenerated human family as their children on the earthly plane of being. Mankind will become Christ's children by the consecration of themselves. The Father's will for them will not be the spirit nature, but human restitution to all that was lost in Adam.

For all these reasons we see that it is proper that we should make no change at this time either in the symbolic baptism or in the language used in connection with the same. We think it a fitting picture of consecration to God and His service on whatever plane of life one may spend eternity, whether spiritual or earthly.—Z. '16:294.

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A WINTON

Old Corn Gems

NUMBER EIGHTY-SEVEN

"And they did eat of the OLD CORN of the land on the morrow after the Passover . . . and the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the OLD CORN of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year." Joshua 5:11-12.

A SAFE RULE

"WHERE A BROTHER GIVES AN INTERPRETATION OF A SCRIPTURE WHICH DIFFERS FROM THAT GIVEN BY BROTHER RUSSELL, AND BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION SEEMS REASONABLE AND IN HARMONY WITH THE PLAN OF GOD, THEN WE BELIEVE IT A SAFE RULE TO FOLLOW BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION, FOR THE REASON THAT HE IS THE SERVANT OF THE CHURCH, SO CONSTITUTED BY THE LORD FOR THE LAODICEAN PERIOD; AND THEREFORE WE SHOULD EXPECT THE LORD TO TEACH US THROUGH HIM. WHERE THERE ARISES A DOUBT IN THE MIND AS TO WHICH INTERPRETATION IS CORRECT, THEN IT IS ALWAYS SAFER TO RESOLVE THAT DOUBT IN FAVOR OF BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION. WE BELIEVE SUCH TO BE IN HARMONY WITH THE LORD'S WILL." Z. '18:51.

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Spared in the Day of Trouble

"They shall be Mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels; and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him."—Mal. 3:17.

LIKE MANY OTHER prophecies, the words of the Prophet Malachi seem to have a general application throughout the Gospel Age and a particular one at the close of the Age. Eighteen hundred years ago the Lord Jehovah began to make up His jewels. The first of these jewels was our Lord Jesus Christ, who was polished, perfected and taken up on high. Jehovah did not cease His work with the perfection of His Son, our Lord. He has arranged that other jewels be cut and polished after the similitude of His Son, that they may shine with Him in the heavenly glory and Kingdom: as it is written, "We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works."—Eph. 2:10.

These gems must all be found by God, who is making up these jewels. But having been found of Him, they are placed in the hands of the great Lapidarist, our Lord Jesus, that He may cut, polish and fit them for the glorious work of shining with Him in the Kingdom. Our Heavenly Father has appointed our Lord to be the great Master Workman in the preparation of the jewels.

In our text, the Lord Jehovah says that in that day of preparation of the jewels He will spare this class as a man spares his own son that serves him. He has not spared this class in the sense of relieving them from all suffering, for if they were thus spared they could not share the glory to follow this trial time. He did not spare Jesus, the Head over the Church, which is His Body. But He will not permit them to be tempted above what they are able to bear. (1 Cor. 10:13.) He has an interest in them and a sympathy for them, and delivers them from those things which would prove too weighty for them.

The Mounting of the Jewels Going on

In a certain sense, then, God has been making up His jewels for more than eighteen hundred years —in the sense of preparing them. But there is still a final gathering, or assembling, of this class, which has not yet been completed. The gathering of these jewels must include the resurrection, not merely of those who have been sleeping as members of the Body of Christ, but also of those who are alive and remain to the end of the Age. These all experience a change from animal to spirit conditions—"changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." (1 Cor. 15:51, 52.) In the assembling of this class—the mounting of the jewels, as it were—the Lord will show His own workmanship, what He has selected out of the filth and mire of the sinful race of mankind, and what He has made of them.

This gathering of the jewels is that to which the Prophet Malachi refers in the following quotation: "Behold, I will send My Messenger, and he shall prepare the way before Me; and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the Messenger of the Covenant, whom ye delight in; behold, He shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts. But who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth? for He is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap; and He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; and He shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness."—Mal. 3:1-3.

The Messenger of the Covenant is, primarily, our Lord Jesus, who came more than eighteen hundred years ago and presented Himself to those who were heirs of the New Covenant—the Jews. The Apostle points out that this new arrangement meant, not only a new Mediator for them, but also better sacrifices and a new priesthood, who would be able to effect a satisfaction for the sins of the people, so that it would not be necessary to render the typical sacrifices thereafter year by year.—Heb. 9:11-15.

This Messenger of the Covenant came unto His own, but His own received Him not. "But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God"—to become associated with Himself, to become identified with Himself, as members of His Body. They are begotten to a new nature, not of the will of the flesh, but only of God.—John 1:11-13.

The Lord's Words a Refining Fire

In this sense of the word, our Lord sat as a refiner of gold and silver—discriminating, purifying. The words which He spoke were not only words of grace, of eternal life, but also words of purification, likened elsewhere to a sharp, two-edged sword. (Heb. 4:12.) The Prophet Malachi compares them to fullers' soap, which would take out all stains and leave the garment pure and white; and he also says that our Lord will sit as a refiner of gold and silver, that the Levite class may offer to the Lord an acceptable sacrifice.

This prophecy refers, as we see, to the antitypical priesthood and includes both the Royal Priests and the Great Company. The work of this great Refiner is to purify the members of the Church class—not only the Little Flock, but the Great Company as well.

This refining process takes place all through the Gospel Age. As the individual members of the Body of Christ grow in grace, they are put through not only the preliminary processes of the refining, but also the more trying ones. Gold represents the Divine or higher order of spirit nature, and silver, the lower order. The gold represents the Little Flock, and the silver the Great Company.

None of these would be able to make an acceptable sacrifice of himself; but the great Advocate imputes His merit to each who offers himself in sacrifice and thus enables him to become such. The Father permits the Advocate to make of these acceptable sacrifices. They are His sacrifices, not their own. Then they are begotten to the new nature and adopted into the Body of Christ. By

Ab 9-16

this offering, our Lord, as the great Mediator, is getting ready for the institution of the New Covenant.

The Present a Wonderful Time

The closing scenes of the Gospel Age will be the most remarkable of the world's history. The Church will then be completed. We are not at liberty to guess when the end of the trouble will be. Whether **all** of the trouble will come in the next two or three years we do not know. But we think that the **most serious part** of the trouble will occupy a very short time.

Let us remember that we are living in most wonderful times. More can be accomplished in one month now than could have been done in years some time ago—more in one hour than in days formerly. We are still in the waiting attitude, so that the Lord can indicate His will in the matter to us. . . . We fully believe that the year 1914 will see (saw) the end of the Gentile Times, **for we cannot find even one flaw in our Bible chronology.** But we do not claim infallibility. . . .

In a short time the Lord will spare His people—not from the trouble altogether, but from any unnecessary experience. We cannot expect that He will spare them as jewels any more than He did His Only Begotten Son. He allowed that Son to be put to death—even the death of the cross. Yet He protected our Lord and did not permit any of the things which He suffered to work to His detriment. And so the Lord will spare us as New Creatures. He is preparing for us the glorious things which He has in reservation for the faithful.—Z. '12:326, 327.

The Mortal Body the Servant of the New Mind

"I keep my body under, and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means . . . I myself should be a castaway."—1 Cor. 9:27.

ST. PAUL was a most successful soldier of the cross; and from his Epistles we gain much information as to how to fight our own weaknesses successfully. In our text the Apostle speaks particularly of himself, with the evident intention of teaching a lesson to all of the Lord's people whom he addressed at that time or who would receive his word subsequently—including ourselves.

The thought is not that we are to keep each other under, nor that the Lord is keeping our bodies under, but that a special commission is given to us in respect to our own bodies, and that we ourselves will be held accountable for their conduct. This statement, "I keep my body under," would be true only of one who has been begotten of the Holy Spirit, and who has become a New Creature in Christ Jesus. But although the individual is reckonedly a member of the Body of Christ, adopted into God's family, and called a son of God, he has not as yet, of course, received the spirit body promised him, but is waiting to receive it in the resurrection.

Good Intentions Not Sufficient

Meantime God calls upon all spirit-begotten ones to demonstrate their loyalty to righteousness and their faithfulness by practising upon their mortal bodies. When coming into Christ, they made a full consecration of themselves, of their bodies and all that is theirs, to the Lord's service. It was on account of this Covenant of sacrifice that they were counted as members of the Body of Christ and begotten of the Holy Spirit—sons of God. It is not sufficient, however, to declare our intention; but God allows the difficulties and trials of life to prove our faithfulness to the sacrifice we have made. And while making provision for the blemishes of our mortal body, He, nevertheless, holds us responsible for our bodies, for our words and our actions. He calls us to be New Creatures; and we must develop our characters to such an extent that the New Creature will fight down, to the best of his ability, everything opposed to the new will. The first part of the text declares, "I keep my body under," that is to say, in subordination, under restraint.

Those who deal in horses tell us that all horses must be broken; and that to break a horse is difficult of accomplishment and requires a great deal of force. The object in thus dealing with the horse is not to continue to break the animal every day, but to break him once for all, that he might be put to some service. This illustration seems to fit the Apostle's thought.

As a New Creature the Apostle had a mortal body which was rebellious against God's will, and thus must be dealt with in a firm manner, in order to bring it under the control of its master—the new mind, whose Head is Christ. If the body be taught this lesson of submission, it may be a good, useful servant of the new master and serve unto death, just as a horse may be broken in and serve his master well. This is the thought in the Apostle's words, "I keep my body under." In substance the Apostle says, "I must break in this human nature, force it into harmony with the new will, and bring it into subjection, making it a servant to myself, the New Creature. This I do because this is the Divine will and the very thing to which I have been called.

As a New Creature I wish to show that I am loyal to the principles of righteousness and truth everywhere. But this old body is more or less in rebellion against God and against the principles of the Divine arrangement. And it is my duty to see to what extent I can carry out this proposition—the bringing of the old mind into subjection to God and to righteousness. And in proportion as I make myself a servant of righteousness, God will use me, and to that extent I shall grow and become an overcomer. By doing these things an entrance will be administered to me into the everlasting Kingdom of Jesus Christ. But if I fail to carry this out, I shall fail of the character-development which all must have who would be accounted members of the Body of Christ."

As St. Paul says in another place, God foreordained that He would have a Church, and that all who would be of this Church should become copies of His Son, Christ Jesus. (Rom. 8:28-30.) So, if St. Paul would remain a member of this Body of Christ, he must keep his human body under, must subordinate his earthly nature, not merely bringing it into subjection to things which would be for righteousness and truth, but also bringing it into subjection as regards natural things. So must all do who would come off "more than conquerors" in the good fight: it is necessary that we should carry out this fulness of service: that we should be faithful unto death, and that we should show this consecration, not only in our minds, but also in our mortal bodies.

When the Apostle says here that he would be in danger of being a "castaway" if he did not bring his body into subjection, and thus prove to be an overcomer, it is tantamount to saying that he would fail to make his calling and election sure. He was called to become an heir of God and joint-heir with Jesus Christ. If, therefore, he should fail to perform his part of the contract of sacrifice, he would become a castaway in respect to this election. He would not gain the election. He would lose in the race in which he had started.

Habits Make Character

It is our duty to watch ourselves that we do no harm, that our body does good service and not injury to ourselves. A man or a woman or a child who goes through the house slamming doors, and merely says, "I was in a hurry and could not help it," is not gentle. He is not a gentleman, or she is not a gentlewoman. Whoever fails to cultivate gentleness is failing to cultivate the fruits of the Spirit. He is losing a glorious opportunity of practising upon himself—of keeping his body under, of getting himself into the way of doing things in a sensible, reasonable manner. The person who bangs doors and goes about noisily is one who does not think of other people and their interests. When we talk about ourselves all the time and think about ourselves all the time, it is an evidence of selfishness. In all these things the Lord expects us to keep our bodies under, and to show carefulness in keeping our bodies under, in the little things of life as well as in the great things.

If our Lord Jesus were here, none of us would expect Him to go about noisily, slamming the doors of the house, or to be wasteful. Our Lord was most economical in the two cases where He fed the four thousand and the five thousand. Although there was plenty of food to feed the multitude, He told His disciples to "gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost."—John 6:12.

Thus did God's dear Son view matters; and we desire to be copies of Him. In building character we must wilfully and intentionally do right. The person who practices in the little things will be also careful in the larger matters. Even the pins, the needles and the paper we should use carefully. Not that any should be miserly—not willing to give one a pin if he wants one—but do not think to waste even them, saying, "Oh, the pins cost only a trifle, anyway!" The Lord was always generous, but He was economical. So we should all be. We should keep the body under the new mind. The new mind should be looking out for these matters and keeping the old body in service.—Z. '12:111, 112.

God's Use of Things in Our Hand

"And the Lord said unto Moses, What is that in thine hand?"—Exodus 4:2.

MOSES had been called of the Lord to the great and honorable work of delivering His people from the bondage of Egypt. He was now eighty years of age. His long experience in the Egyptian court had given him an insight into the affairs of government. Stephen tells us (Acts 7:22) that "Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in word and in deed." Tradition says that he was also an able general in the Egyptian army.

Yet he relinquished all these earthly advantages to cast in his lot with the despised people of God. (Heb. 11:24-26.) "Moses . . . refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward"—he preferred to share with God's chosen people, Israel, in their affliction, and to have part with them in the Promise made to their fathers.

How appropriate it was that the man whom God called to be the leader of Israel out of bondage should be a learned man, and one well equipped to be at the head of such a people and under such circumstances! We cannot doubt that his wandering as a shepherd in the wilderness for forty years, tending the flocks of Jethro, his father-in-law, made him thoroughly familiar with every road, every hill, every stream: and that this was subsequently of great advantage to him, when, under the Lord's direction, he became leader of Israel through this wilderness en route to Canaan.

Meekness Taught by Experience

But this forty years' experience in Midian had taught Moses another important lesson—the lesson of meekness. And his long isolation had made him reserved. Furthermore, soon after severing his connection with the royal house of Egypt, he had made an attempt to deliver his people; but they had not wished his services, and had rather resented his interference. So now, when the Lord would send him to do this great work, he was distrustful of his ability to lead the people of Israel out of bondage into the land of Canaan, and was fearful and reluctant.

The Lord had appeared to Moses in the burning bush which was not consumed, had given him his commission, and had assured him that He, Jehovah, would certainly be with him. Moses, however, very properly felt the magnitude of the undertaking and his own insufficiency. He urged that he was incompetent, that it would require some one more powerful than he to influence the heart of the king of Egypt. He knew that it would be entirely contrary to the purpose and policy of the Egyptians to let the Israelites go from their service. He said to the Lord, "Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?" But the Lord assured him that He would Himself be responsible; that He would direct in the matter.

"What Is That in Thine Hand?"

Still Moses wanted some demonstration of God's approval and power. He asked, How shall I make Israel **know** that Thou hast sent me? for they will not believe. Then the Lord asked, "What is that in thine hand?" Moses answered, "A rod." And the Lord said to him, "Cast it upon the ground." Moses did so, and the rod became a serpent, and Moses fled from it. If he had not particularly noticed what he had in his hand, he might have thought that possibly it had been a serpent before. But he had looked, and was sure that it was a staff which had been changed into a serpent. Then God told him to take up the serpent by the tail. He did so, and it again became a rod in his hand.

The Lessons For Us

From this we would take the lesson that if the Lord sends us on any mission, we should not have the feeling that we could conquer the world, but should realize our own littleness and should properly feel wholly insufficient of ourselves. We should realize that without His assisting grace we could accomplish nothing. We should be very sure that He has commissioned us, and that our mission is not some foolish thought of our own. We should be very sure that the Lord is back of the whole arrangement. Then we should have full confidence in Him.

We should feel like saying with Moses, "I cannot do anything." But if we wish to serve the Lord, we are to look to what we have in our hands, whether it be one talent or another. God is so wise that He can use our humblest talent to His praise. What He wants us to use may be right in our hands, and we may not have noticed it. No matter how ordinary our lives may be, God is able to use us, and to give us also the needed lessons in connection with our experiences.

Another lesson that we could draw from the Lord's dealings with Moses is that the things which we have in our hand, those things closest to us, might become injurious to us, if it were not that the power of God is able to make everything work together for our good. If we have the spirit of **service,** the Lord can and will use things right at our hand—not necessarily things afar from us; and the Divine power over evil can make all things work out good to those who love Him. More and more we are learning these lessons. If, then, we would serve, we should look to see what we have in our possession; what things we can make use of.

Faithful in Least—Faithful in Much

A great many people would like to serve the Lord with a **thousand tongues.** If they had a thousand tongues, they feel **sure** they would sing with them **all.** How do we know that we would use a **thousand** tongues, if we do not faithfully use the **one** we have? "He that is faithful in that which is **least"** will be faithful in the **greater** things.

There are plenty of people who like to address thousands. But if we cannot address **thousands,** it is all the more necessary to address **one.** Some say that if they had a million of dollars they would give it to the Lord. But the Lord is not likely to ever give them the chance of giving large sums if they do not manifest a disposition to give of the small amounts already in their possession. "To him that hath [through use of his talents] shall be given, . . . and from him that hath not [from neglect of his talent] shall be taken away even that which he hath."

So the lesson to us of Moses' experiences would seem to be—the use of things we have in our hands. The same lesson is taught in another way in the case of the poor widow who cried to the Prophet Elisha for help. She was in poverty, and her creditors were about to take her two sons for debt. "What hast thou in the house?" asked Elisha. The woman replied, "Not anything in the house save a pot of oil." Then the Prophet told her to go and borrow empty vessels from her neighbors—"not a few"—and to then begin to pour out the oil into the vessels. The woman obeyed, and all the vessels were filled with oil, and she had oil to sell and thus pay her debt. The Lord used what she had in her hand.

It was the same way with the Lord's miracle in feeding the thousands. He asked, What have you on hand? He did not say, How far is it to town? And He did not tell the Apostles to get wagons and go to town for bread and meat. But He said, Use what you have. And He blessed the five loaves of bread and the two small fishes, to the abundant feeding of the five thousand; they all ate "as much as they would," and of what remained the disciples gathered up **twelve baskets full.** (John 6:5-13.) So we should use all our talents and opportunities. The Lord is looking for us to use **what we have, and** we shall receive blessing therefrom; and the more faithful we are in the performance of our privileges, the greater will be our blessings from Him.

Moses' Experiences Typical

In addition to the lessons just noted, we believe there is a further significance in the experiences of Moses, and the deliverance of Israel. We are to see something representative of conditions in our day. Moses was acting under Divine instruction. Many things connected with this mission of Moses to the

Israelites seem typical of the deliverance of God's people from the power of evil. Pharaoh was typical of Satan. We are living in the corresponding time, when God purposes to deliver all from the power of Satan. Jesus and the Church will be the Agent of Jehovah—the deliverance will be the work of Messiah as God's Representative.

The rod represents **authority.** This was illustrated at the time when the Lord instructed that Aaron should represent Him as the head of the tribe of Levi. There had been murmurings in Israel, and the principal men of the twelve tribes were instructed by the Lord through Moses to take each man his rod, write upon it his name and send it into the Tabernacle. (Num. 17:1-9.) Aaron's rod was to go in with the others, because it was the rod of his father's family. And when they examined the rods in the morning, Aaron's rod had budded, blossomed and brought forth almonds.

This would give us to understand that a rod might generally be considered to represent authority. As the **hand** is **power,** so the **rod** is **authority.** Thus the rod would seem to be a special manifestation of Divine Power and Rule. We may not speak too positively of the antitypical fulfilment of this experience of Moses. But we might think that in some way or other the power of God would **appear** to be evil—the serpent was evil. Evil has seemed to triumph for these six thousand years. When Moses and Aaron went into the presence of Pharaoh, Moses' rod became a serpent there also. Then the magicians cast down their rods, and they became serpents. But Moses' rod swallowed up all the rods of the magicians.

Resuming the Rod of Power

We would very much like to know just what these things signify—just how God will permit the world under the power of Satan to have an hour of triumph. There is to be permitted a great Time of Trouble, and it will be because of the casting down, for a time, of Divine authority and rule.

We think this condition is present now. People are losing confidence in God. They are feeling, for the time, as though there were no God. The tendency of Higher Criticism and Evolution is to give humanity the impression that there is no God but Nature. And as mankind get this idea of a Nature-god that is ruthless, relentless, impersonal, it is very likely to efface all thought of a living God of Justice and Love. "There is no fear of God before their eyes," the Scriptures say. So we may expect a great Time of Trouble, when the power of God will seem to be a further manifestation of evil—as the power of evil. The taking up of the rod of power again, a little later, will be the resuming of Divine authority.—Z. '14:78, 79.

The Trial Hour

Eph. 6:10-18.

The "hour of temptation" has come to the Church,
The time of her testing is here.
And storm-clouds of ominous portent roll up,
Betokening the tempest is near.

The carnage grows fiercer 'twixt error and truth,
The hosts of the foe press around
As the day waxes late and the shadows grow long,
And their tauntings and boastings abound.

And many who fought in the ranks by our side,
Have been pierced by the enemy's dart;
Their "shield" and their "helmet" lie prone in the dust,
And the "arrow" has smitten their heart.

Their arm lost its cunning in wielding the "sword."
Their "breastplate" was loosed from its place.
The "helmet" was lost and the shafts of the foe
Smote them down and they sank in disgrace.

O, dear fellow-soldiers! O brethren in Christ!
Let us gird up our "armor" anew!
Let us heed the sure Word of our leader and "Head"
And be loyal and steadfast and true.

The night hastens on—only one hour to fight;
No thought now of wavering nor fear;
Our Captain calls, "Onward!" then close up the ranks,
For the hour of our victory is near.

Courage, comrades! The banner of truth waves aloft:
No such banner was ever unfurled!
We will follow its lead e'en thro' carnage and blood,
For by it we shall conquer the world!

Tho' feet may grow weary and hearts throb with pain,
Let us never give up in the fray;
Our Captain is strong and can know no defeat,
And will guide to the end of the way.

Soon the fight will be over, the conflict be past,
And the "roll-call" will sound thro' the sky,
Will you answer your name? **Shall I answer to mine?**
Can we gladly respond: **"Here am I!"**

O, God of the battle, our Father, to Thee
With strong supplication we cry!
The conflict is deadly and wily our foe,
Yet we know that deliverance is nigh.

And thou who hast guided and led all the way
Wilt guide 'till the victory is won,
'Till the night is all spent and the glad day has dawned,
And we hear thy sweet plaudit, "Well done!"

—Z. '10:300.

Barren Fig Tree—Defiled Temple

Mark 11:12-25.

"By their fruits ye shall know them."—Matthew 7:20.

THE triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem was a past incident. After spending a portion of the day in the Holy City, Jesus returned to Bethany, which is merely a suburb. The next morning, going again to the city, Jesus noted a fig tree by the wayside, bearing plenty of leaves. He approached it, seeking figs, but found none. The good show of leaves was deceptive. Then Jesus put a ban, a curse, a blight, upon the tree, declaring that it should not bear fruit forever, or to a completion. What did this mean? Surely it was not an intimation that the followers of Jesus should place a curse upon every unfruitful tree or unfruitful field! There must have been some deeper lesson in it, not apparent on the surface.

Bible students believe that they now see the deeper significance of this carefully noted incident. They believe that that fig tree was used as a type, or picture, of the Jewish nation; and that that blight upon the tree because of its unfruitfulness corresponded exactly to the blight pronounced the day before upon the Jewish nation because of its unfruitfulness.

On the day previous Jesus had said to the Jewish nation, "Ye shall see Me no more until that Day." So He declared of this tree that it should be blighted to the end of the aion, or Age. Again, when speaking to His disciples respecting the end of this Age, Jesus declared, "When ye shall see the fig tree putting forth leaves, then know that summer is nigh"—that the winter time, the blight time of the nation of Israel and of the world, is at an end. In other words, one of the signs of a New Dispensation would be the sprouting, or indications of life, hope, promise, amongst the Jews. . . .

We know of no other interpretation which seems to fit the facts of this lesson or to show a reason why Jesus should manifest displeasure against an inanimate object, which had no personal responsibility or accountability.

Cleansing of the Temple

After the fig tree incident, Jesus and His disciples proceeded to Jerusalem and went directly to the Temple. There, contrary to anything that He had previously done, Jesus assumed authority, and began to cast out the traders without ceremony, overturning the tables of the money-changers and the stalls where doves were sold to people who desired to offer them in sacrifice at the Temple. Another account of the same incident tells us that in this cleansing of the Temple Jesus used a scourge of small cords, and drove forth the traders. Today's lesson tells us that He would not permit even the carrying of vessels through the Temple. All this is of double significance:

(1) Primarily, it had to do with that time;

(2) Secondarily, it was typical of a cleansing of the antitypical Temple due, we believe, in this our day.

According to the legal usages of our day, it would be quite improper for any one to enter any church edifice or temple in order to interfere with any of the rights of conscience or the procedure sanctioned by the congregation owning the edifice. If wrong were being done and he wished to rectify it, it would be his duty either to go and swear out a warrant before a magistrate or to call a policeman and have him take note of the infraction of the law and correct matters. But under the Jewish Law it was different. Every Jew was privileged to enforce the Divine Law in respect to blasphemy or any sacrilege. Parents were even required by the Law to stone their own children to death for blasphemy.

Jesus therefore did only what any Jew would have a right to do, in upsetting the trading apparatus of those who were defiling the Temple of the Lord, doing violence to its sanctity. It will be noticed that as much as their Scribes and Pharisees desired to find some occasion against Jesus, they made no objection to the high-handed procedure here described. Jesus was within His rights. He was championing the cause, the honor, of God and His Temple, as He had a perfect right to do.

"Made It a Den of Thieves"

In the declaration, "Ye have made it a den of thieves," Jesus intimated that responsibility for the prevailing condition of things rested upon those in authority—the Scribes and the Pharisees. For graft and other considerations they had permitted the especially consecrated House of God to become a place of merchandise. Moreover, it is claimed by some that the Temple was frequently used as a place for barter on a larger scale. Here money-sharks found opportunity for meeting people in distress, who came to the Temple for prayer. Such were referred to by Jesus as those who robbed widows, while for pretense they made long prayers. In other words, Jesus judged that some in His day made a cloak, or pretense, of their religion in order to take advantage and to reap pecuniary benefit. Hence the Temple had become a "den of thieves."

In olden times, as with many at present, there was a literalness attached to the word theft which only partly covered its meaning. The loan-sharks infested the Temple, pretended sympathy for those in trouble, and loaned money on exacting terms which finally devoured the property of the widow and the orphan in a legal manner. We fear that the same is true today—that religion is still used as a cloak to cover selfishness. People who do not think of literally committing theft, robbery, often succumb to the arguments of warped consciences. The Master, who was especially indignant at such misuse of the House of God of old, holds the same sentiments today. It is in vain that any claim to be His followers, His disciples, His friends, members of the true Church of Christ, who at the same time use religion hypocritically.

"The House of Prayer"

While Jesus often went into the mountain to pray, or prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane, while Pharisees sometimes prayed on the street corners, and while St. Peter went to the housetop to pray, nevertheless the Temple was recognized by all the Jews as especially a House of prayer. Thus we read that St. Peter and St. John went up to the Temple to pray. (Acts 3:1.) It was the one place of all others in the world where the soul might feel that it could draw especially near to God. In the Most Holy was the Mercy Seat, upon which rested the Shekinah light, representing Divine Presence.

The nearer to that Most Holy any one was able to draw, the more was he understood to be in communion with God. Thus the priests alone might enter the Holy and the Most Holy. The others of the nation of Israel were not permitted to come nearer than the Court. Of these courts there were three—first, the one for the Jews; second, the one for Jewish women; and third, an outer Court, where believing Gentiles might worship the true God, but separated by "a middle wall of partition," as St. Paul declares. (Ephesians 2:14.) These Courts represented differing degrees of approach to God's favor. In the antitype, which is not yet complete, Christ and His Church will be the Temple proper; and all mankind desiring to approach God will approach through The Christ, the Temple of God. And the nearer they come, the greater will be their blessing.

St. Peter and St. Paul both tell us of this antitypical Temple: "Know ye not that your body is the Temple of the Holy Spirit?" (1 Corinthians 6:19.) "The Temple of God is holy, which Temple ye are." (1 Corinthians 3:17.) The Church, making increase for years in the fruits and graces of the Holy Spirit, "groweth unto a holy Temple of the Lord." (Ephesians 2:21.) "Ye also as living stones are built up a spiritual House." (1 Peter 2:5.) "Ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Holy Spirit"—"built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the Chief Corner Stone."—Ephesians 2:20-22.

This antitypical Temple may be viewed from four different standpoints. In harmony with the last text quoted, it is still under construction. The living stones are . . . being polished for places in the glorious Temple of which Christ is the Head. That Temple will be spiritual, unseen of men, each member like unto the glorified Jesus, far above angels.

In that Temple God by His Holy Spirit will dwell in fullest measure. Through it all mankind, during the Millennium, will be privileged to draw near to God and to receive Divine favors and uplift out of sin and death, back to the original image and likeness of God lost in Eden, redeemed for all at Calvary, and to be offered to all during Messiah's Kingdom Reign of a thousand years. Then in the largest sense of the word it will be God's Holy Place. Nothing defiling shall be brought into it. All merchandising and money-sharking will be far from it. It will be the House of Prayer, the Channel of Prayer, the way of approach of mankind to draw near to God for forgiveness of sins and for the reception of all the blessings and mercies which God has provided in Christ for whosoever will.

It was because the Temple at Jerusalem was a type of that glorious Temple of perfection that all business of every kind done in it was profanation—was spoiling the beautiful perfection of the type—was misrepresenting the future, the reality—God's intention in giving it.

"Your Body Is the Temple"

But now let us take a still different view of the subject—not contradictory to the foregoing, but confirmatory. As in the future the Church will be the Temple of God, perfect on the heavenly plane, so each individual member of the Church of Christ, who has been begotten of the Holy Spirit as a New Creature, has to that extent God dwelling in his mortal body. The world in general are not temples of the Holy Spirit, however good or moral or kind or generous.

No one becomes a temple of the Holy Spirit until begotten of the Holy Spirit. That spirit-begetting constitutes him a New Creature, a son of God, even though only the will, the mind, is begotten again—even though the body is still an imperfect body of flesh. The new mind, dwelling in the old body and using it, constitutes that old body thenceforth a temple of God, and gives to that body a holiness or sanctity which it did not have before.

Now, as the New Creature dwells in this mortal body, it is styled a tabernacle rather than a temple, because through sin and degradation it is impaired, and not glorious. Besides, the word tabernacle signifies that which is temporary, not permanent, not eternal. Our Heavenly house, our spiritual body, will be the Temple, but none can enter that perfect Temple condition except by a share in the First Resurrection, as Jesus said: "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the First Resurrection: on such the Second Death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years."—Revelation 20:6.

None can know the character of the heart, whether it be a new heart or merely that of the natural man or woman who has learned politeness, morality, etc. The only way in which we are permitted to judge each other is by the outward fruitage. If the Spirit of the Lord dwell within, the fruitage must be good, helpful to others. That human being must be a blessing in his home, in his community, even as Jesus was, whether his character, his goodness, be acknowledged by others in general or not. The fruits of these people of God are the fruits of holiness, meekness, gentleness, longsuffering, brotherly-kindness, self-sacrifice in the interest of others and especially in the service of God and His Truth.—Z. '14:219-221.

◆

When the Lord prepares a table we may be sure of several things: first, that it will be clean; secondly, that it will be good; thirdly, that it will be orderly, bountiful and beautiful. And wherever we find the truth thus carefully set before the household of faith. . . . there we may be sure the spirit of the Lord has been at work, directing and superintending the matter.—Z. '92:358.

The Conflict Between Flesh and Spirit

"The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."—Galatians 5:17.

THE APOSTLE is addressing these words to Christians, who have become New Creatures in Christ, to whom old things have passed away, and all things have become new. These are said to be begotten of the Holy Spirit and therefore to be, in reality, spirit beings, who will be changed in the Resurrection, "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye"—spirit beings who have not yet been completed. But the New Creature has only the flesh in which to operate at the present time.

God expects that the New Creature will manifest his loyalty, and demonstrate worthiness of perfection of the spirit in the First Resurrection. The Apostle says that such must expect to find a conflict going on—the Spirit lusting against the flesh and the flesh against the Spirit. The word **lust** here used is a good Anglo-Saxon word meaning **desire.** The **New Creature** strongly desires to be loyal to God and to do His will. The **flesh** strongly desires **against** all this.

These two spirits are in opposition. The two are in antagonism. The flesh desires to serve itself. It has earthly desires, earthly objects, earthly aims. The New Creature desires to set its affections on the Heavenly things and to sacrifice the earthly interests and aims and prospects, to live as a spirit being tabernacling in the flesh—to live no longer as a human being with earthly interests. Whatever serves the one interest is in conflict with the other interest.

New Creatures Hampered by the Flesh

The words of our text are not addressed to the world, but to the Church. The Church has been begotten of the Holy Spirit—a New Creation. If these live after the flesh, if they renounce their covenant of sacrifice, they will die. But if they mortify, or kill, the deeds of the flesh and abandon this wholly for the Spirit, they shall live—have everlasting life. We all see that in our Lord Jesus, holy, harmless, undefiled, there was such a contrast; the earthly interests drawing one way, and the Heavenly interests another. These were all pure and perfect desires; nevertheless, as the New Creature, begotten of the Holy Spirit, He was obliged to overcome them.

We recall our Lord's words very near the conclusion of His ministry: "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" (Luke 12:50.) The conflict was going on; but the Lord's spirit was firm, and He was obedient to the terms of His sacrifice. Being **perfect,** however, **He could** do those things that He would. He did them, and won the great victory.

In our case the matter is different. **We** are by nature **fallen.** Our earthly appetites and tastes are depraved. All are more or less selfish; some more depraved than are others.

Our flesh is depraved; **we cannot** do the things that we would. Hence we need the merit of Christ to assist us; hence the Apostle tells us that every time we as New Creatures have done wrong, we should acknowledge the error and go to the Throne of Heavenly Grace to obtain mercy and find help for future needs. Thus we show to God the loyalty of our hearts. All those having Christ's mind and disposition are hampered merely by the weaknesses of the flesh, the **fallen** flesh; but they have an Advocate, to whom they may go and have these weaknesses of the fallen flesh compensated for.

The question may arise, Why should there be any conflict between the flesh and the spirit in our case? and how do we overcome these weaknesses sufficiently to desire to become joint-sacrificers with Christ, before we are begotten of the Spirit at all? The answer is that while the whole race is fallen, many of the fallen ones realize the shame of their condition and long to do righteously, but are unable to do so. They find themselves to be slaves of sin. They are weak; they are so bound that they cannot do the things that they would. Many of the Jews were in this condition. They were desirous to do God's will, but were unable to do so. The **desire** was there, the **will** was there. But because of man's fallen condition there were other qualities of their mind in opposition.

The human mind is made up of various qualities. When sin came in, the lower and baser of these qualities of the original man gained the ascendancy, and the nobler of these qualities gradually became effaced, until the original likeness of God was measurably gone from humanity. But in some of the sons and daughters of Adam there is sufficient of the original God-likeness to oppose sin and to seek to have reformation of life. Such good influences are manifest even amongst the heathen.

During the Jewish Age, some amongst the Jews were seeking to live in harmony with God. Others were following the course of Belial, and serving Satan and giving themselves up to selfishness. And so it is today. The Jews could not keep their Law, and unless they could keep the Law perfectly, they would fail of getting everlasting life, just the same as those who had never been under the Law. Since Pentecost there has been a different arrangement. God has provided a Savior, whose death is efficacious for the sins of the world.

The Conflict Ends With Death

Why, then, has this death not yet been effective for the world? God is wishing to find a class willing to lay down life itself in God's service. Some of these fallen children of Adam, noting the call of God's Word—to become footstep-followers of Jesus—have enough strength of character to follow in Christ's footsteps. They manifest their determination by consecrating their lives to His service. Such a consecration means that the higher qualities of the mind have united, and have gotten control of the lower qualities of the mind, putting them under constraint.

Under the inspiring influence of God's promises and the Message of the Gospel, they are through the great Advocate received as members of His Body—as New Creatures in Christ, begotten of the Holy Spirit. Thenceforth they have a relationship with God. They are expected then to go forward from step to step, continually fighting against the snares of Satan. This is the Christian's life—the battle mentioned in our text. The two influences—the flesh and the Spirit—are contrary; hence the conflict.

There is no need to go **outside** and battle with **others.** There is plenty to do **within.** **Happy** are those who, by their endeavors, show their loyalty to God! In due time, by the power of the First Resurrection, they will lose the old body altogether and will be clothed upon with immortality. If we are "faithful unto death," we shall be like Him, our Lord and Head, see Him as He is, and share His glory.

There is, however, a great and continuous battle; for although the new will asserts itself, puts the body under and compels its subjection to the new mind, nevertheless, the mortal body, not being actually dead, is continually coming in contact with the world and the Adversary, and is continually being stimulated by these and by earthly cares, ambitions, methods, strivings, conflicts, to insubordination to our new will.

No saint is without experience of this kind—fightings without and within. It must be a fight **to the finish,** or the great prize for which we fight will not be gained. For although the New Creature, by the Lord's grace and strength, repeatedly masters the mortal body, nevertheless, **until death** there can be **no cessation of the conflict.**

"How goes the fight with thee?
  The **life-long battle** 'gainst all evil things?
Thine no low strife, and thine no selfish aim;
  It is the war of **giants** and of **kings!**

* * *

"Say not the fight is **long;**
  'Tis but **one battle** and the **fight is o'er;**
No **second warfare** mars thy victory,
  And the **one triumph** is for **evermore!**"
—Z. '13:103, 104.

KERNELS KERNELS KERNELS

The Lord himself is at the helm and directing his work, and each and all of us should continually look to him for the guidance of his work and to note how he is leading the various members in the body. —Z. '97:122.

◇

Love for the brethren may be defined as an unselfish desire to do them good, an affectionate and tender regard, and a **kinship of spirit;** and this in proportion as we see the manifestation of the spirit of the Master. If we possess this love, we shall desire to do good to the brethren, even to the degree of sacrificing our own interests.—Z. '17:261.

◇

As the Christian advances in spiritual development, in control of the flesh, in the appreciation of the mind of Christ, he certainly does, in one sense of the word, become "strong in the Lord and in the power of His might"—the power of the Holy Spirit. He becomes more gentle, more meek, more patient, more brotherly-kind, more loving. He is thus developing the fruits and growing in the graces of the Holy Spirit and in character-likeness to the Master and Pattern. But his dangers are not over; for he finds the Adversary and the flesh ready to attack him along new lines—totally different from those of the attacks when he first gave his heart to the Lord.

These later attacks are along the lines of love—the very climax of spiritual attainment. As a New Creature, he desires that his love shall be pure, holy, spiritual. He desires that his love for the brethren shall be along the same lines as is his love for the Father and for the Son and for the holy angels. But as he attempts to adjust this love to present conditions, his holy and pure intentions and ambitions and desires are assailed by the flesh.

Not merely do the brethren and sisters, like himself, appreciate spiritual things, purity, truth, etc., but their development in the fruits of the Spirit tend to make them more attractive in the flesh, as well as more attractive in mind and disposition. As the spiritual love and confidence and fellowship increase, there is a new danger through the weaknesses of the flesh. Hence there is necessity for every child of God to be constantly on the alert—watching unto prayer against any and every intrusion of the fleshly mind, its appetites and desires. It must be mortified, crucified, killed, **whatever the cost,** in order that the New Creature may survive. The **life** of the one means the **death** of the other. The sooner we **comprehend** this great truth, the better for us.—Z. '13:166.

◇

God's revelation is a mirror of his character, in which we see reflected his purity and love and goodness; and as we therein trace the lines of his glorious character the desire grows and strengthens to be more like him whom we thus learn to admire and love. The sincere heart, accepting the divine plan and its gracious provisions of salvation and blessing through Christ, at once begins to fashion itself in conformity with God's character by first putting away sin and then by striving daily to live a life of purity and holiness. With this effort come in the peace of God and the love of God, to rule and take possession of the whole man. And when the heart is thus cleansed and filled with God, the fruits of such an indwelling life-principle become very manifest to all beholders, in gentleness, mercy, goodness, and pure and holy friendship with all who are like-minded.—Z. '92:281.

◇

Irreverence is frequently manifested by the world; but this does not astound us as much as when we find irreverence manifested by those who profess to be the Lord's consecrated people, His Royal Priesthood. It is sometimes irreverence of manner, sometimes irreverence of language, sometimes the making of jokes on religious things or on passages of Scripture. Everything of the kind is surely injurious to the individual, as well as to his influence with others.—Z. '15:136.

◆

We should never forget the Lord in our personal affairs, and especially in the affairs of his Kingdom. And the recognition of this should make us very careful respecting every step we take "Lest haply we be found even to fight against God."—Acts 5:39; Z. '08:199.

◆

In the present time faith is an indispensable matter according to Divine arrangement, because the Father is seeking a special class to be the associates, the Bride and Joint-heir of His Son. Since these will be ushered into positions of great trust, as well as great honor and great service, they must needs be tempted, tested, in all points. Their faith in the Almighty must be implicit. Similarly, God has provided a special work for the Ancient Worthies, and hence He has recognized as worthy for that work only such as could manifest great faith in Him and in His Word.—Z. '13:61.

◆

The love of the brethren is one of the most beautiful experiences of the Christian. Whoever finds that he has full love for all the brethren, full sympathy for them, therein has a specially strong Scriptural proof that he himself is a New Creature—that he has passed from death unto life. And whoever has any other sentiment than love to any of the brethren surely lacks proof, or demonstration, along this line of his relationship to God as a New Creature.—Z. '13:339.

◆

To live righteously is one of the best ways of proving our obedience to the Lord.—Z. '14:173.

◆

Hindrances and difficulties and obstacles may become the greatest helps and aids under God's providences to those who are of the right condition of heart.—Z. '05:76.

◆

To those who have accepted the Lord's favor, who have already presented their bodies living sacrifices, who have already given the Lord their hearts, we urge a remembrance of the fact that the sacrifice once put upon the altar must remain there, and that the longer it remains the more joyful should be the service, the more appreciated every opportunity for sacrifice, the more thankful should be the heart and the more rich should be the experience in the peace of God which passeth all understanding, ruling in our hearts and preparing us more and more through the graces of the Spirit for the glorious things which God hath in reservation for them that so love Him and so reverence His Son.—Z. '06:15.

◆

At what time the Lord's people will be taken beyond the veil the Lord has not fully indicated. But we have the assurance that when He shall appear, be manifested—when His Epiphania shall occur—we shall be with Him, we shall be like Him and see Him as He is. He will not begin His great work of establishing the Kingdom until the Church shall be with Him. We may not understand all that this implies. Perhaps we may be with our Lord, in service on this side the veil for a while. We had not thought so; but we are simply willing that the Lord's will shall be done, whatever it may be, and we are waiting for the indications of His providence.

"We know not what awaits us,
God kindly veils our eyes,
And o'er each step of our onward way
He makes new scenes to rise;
And every joy He sends us comes
A sweet and glad surprise."

"One step we see before us,
'Tis all we need to see,
The light of Heaven more brightly shines,
When earth's illusions flee;
And sweetly through the silence comes
His loving 'Follow Me'." —Z.'14:309.

◆

It is time for earnest, searching self-examination, for a more diligent watching to see that we do not allow the things of this "present evil world" to absorb our thoughts and energies to the imperiling of our Heavenly hopes, so soon to be realized if we remain wholly faithful to the end. It is highly important that we seek for a still closer walk with God, a more intimate fellowship with Him, a more thorough self-abnegation, a more diligent cross-bearing, a more faithful conformity in every respect to the whole will of the Lord concerning us. And this will of the Lord, we know, is not unreasonable, and His grace sufficient is promised for every day, every hour, every moment!—Z. '15:283.

◆

In proportion as we love God, we get the good out of our experiences. "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to the called according to His purpose." If we know this, we shall receive in the spirit of submission and trust all that comes to us.—Z. '15:265.

GENERAL CONVENTION

A General Convention will be held at 1166 Georgia St. W., Vancouver, B.C., on September 2nd, 3rd and 4th, 1922, a programme of which is printed on page 12.

The Vancouver Ecclesia will provide two meals each day, and they extend a hearty invitation to all Standfasts to attend the Convention. Reception Committee will meet boats and trains. Class Secretaries are requested to advise Bro. Geo. Biddle (Secretary of Convention), 816 Twelfth Ave. W., Vancouver, B.C., how many and when the brethren from their classes will arrive.

To reach Convention Hall, take Robson Street cars going west, get off at Bute Street and walk one block north.

Convention Hall phone, Douglas 2735; Secretary's phone, Fairmont 3443.

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STANDFAST BIBLE STUDENTS' GENERAL CONVENTION

SEPTEMBER 2nd, 3rd and 4th, 1922

Convention Hall, 1166 West Georgia Street, Vancouver, B.C.

Phone Douglas 2735

SECRETARY - - - - - Bro. Biddle
SONG LEADER - - - - Bro. Haller

SATURDAY— "OLD CORN GEMS" DAY

"Praise the LORD, O Jerusalem; praise thy God, O Zion. . . . He maketh peace in thy borders, and filleth thee with the finest of the wheat."—Psa. 147:12, 14.

Chairman - - - - Bro. Bartlett
Pianist - - - - - Sr. Hogen

10:30 A.M.—Address of Welcome.......Bro. Heard
Response.......Bro. Hanham
11:00 A.M.—Old Corn Gems Study (from page 2).......Bro. Haller
Pianist - - - - Sr. McCarter
2:15 P.M.—Praise and Testimony.......Bro. Hogen
3:00 P.M.—Intermission.
3:30 P.M.—Old Corn Gems Study (from page 3).......Bro. Sellars
Pianist - - - - - - Sr. Rae
7:30 P.M.—Praise and Testimony.......Bro. Hankins
8:00 P.M.—Old Corn Gems Talk.......Bro. Zinck

SUNDAY— "SONGS OF SOLOMON" DAY

"The song of songs, which is Solomon's."—Songs of Sol. 1:1.

Chairman - - - - - Bro. Kuenzi
Pianist - - - - - Sr. Edwards

10:30 A.M.—Bethel Service.
10:45 A.M.—Study, Songs of Solomon 1:5.......Bro. Moore
Pianist - - - - - Sr. Russell
2:15 P.M.—Praise and Testimony.......Bro. Tirrell
3:00 P.M.—Intermission.
3:30 P.M.—Study, Songs of Solomon 5:6.......Bro. Zinck
Pianist - - - - - - Sr. Heard
7:30 P.M.—Praise and Testimony.......Bro. McCarter
8:00 P.M.—Study, Songs of Solomon 7:12, 13.......Bro. Heard

MONDAY— "TEMPLE" DAY

"And the man said unto me, Son of man behold with thine eyes, and hear with thine ears, and set thine heart upon all that I shall shew thee; for to the intent that I might shew them unto thee art thou brought hither: declare all that thou seest to the house of Israel."—Ezek. 40:4.

Chairman - - - - Bro. Moore
Pianist - - - - - - Sr. Biddle

10:30 A.M.—Bethel Service.
10:45 A.M.—Temple Study, Question 5.......Bro. Bartlett
Pianist - - - - Sr. Jacobskoetter
2:15 P.M.—Praise and Testimony.......Bro. Biddle
3:00 P.M.—Intermission.
3:30 P.M.—Temple Talk.......Bro. Heard
Pianist - - - - - Bro. Sellars
7:30 P.M.—Praise and Testimony.......Bro. Cooper
8:00 P.M.—Temple Notes.......Bro. Edwards

LOVE FEAST

"Prepare your heart for a blessing. Come to the Convention in the proper spirit—as a disciple, a learner. Come intent also on doing good as well as getting good, of consoling and encouraging others, as well as to be yourself comforted. Above all, come realizing that the Lord himself is the fountain of blessings, and remember his word—not by might, nor by power, but by the Lord's Spirit are we to expect the blessings we hope for. In making ready and en route do not forget this important item, for on it your share in the Convention's blessing greatly depends."—Z. '05:146.

Old Corn Gems

NUMBER EIGHTY-EIGHT

"And they did eat of the OLD CORN of the land on the morrow after the Passover . . . and the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the OLD CORN of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year." Joshua 5:11-12.

A SAFE RULE

"WHERE A BROTHER GIVES AN INTERPRETATION OF A SCRIPTURE WHICH DIFFERS FROM THAT GIVEN BY BROTHER RUSSELL, AND BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION SEEMS REASONABLE AND IN HARMONY WITH THE PLAN OF GOD, THEN WE BELIEVE IT A SAFE RULE TO FOLLOW BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION, FOR THE REASON THAT HE IS THE SERVANT OF THE CHURCH, SO CONSTITUTED BY THE LORD FOR THE LAODICEAN PERIOD; AND THEREFORE WE SHOULD EXPECT THE LORD TO TEACH US THROUGH HIM. WHERE THERE ARISES A DOUBT IN THE MIND AS TO WHICH INTERPRETATION IS CORRECT, THEN IT IS ALWAYS SAFER TO RESOLVE THAT DOUBT IN FAVOR OF BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION. WE BELIEVE SUCH TO BE IN HARMONY WITH THE LORD'S WILL." Z. '18:51.

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"Love as Brethren"

Golden Text—"The will of the Lord be done."—Acts 21:14.

BROTHERHOOD in Christ is the closest of all relationships, and many incidents in the Apostle's journey from Ephesus to Jerusalem illustrate this brotherhood relationship most beautifully. In a preceding lesson we had the account of the parting of Paul and his company from the elders at Ephesus, and of their loving demonstration and tears and prayers. The first verse of this lesson says, "After we were gotten from them," etc.,—the words "gotten from" signifying, torn ourselves away, as though the hearts of all were so thoroughly united that the separation meant the breaking of very tender ties. And so we find it to be today, with the Lord's similarly consecrated people. They become attached to each other in a manner that formal creeds and confessions in earthly bundles, or denominations, do not bind. Each one who is united to Christ feels a special interest in, and sympathy for, each fellow-member, so that, as the Apostle says, if one member rejoice all are glad, and if one member be in trouble or affliction or sorrow all are sympathetically affected. This will be noticeable in proportion as the law of love develops and abounds in each member. The little love in the beginning of Christian character will expand and deepen, filling all the avenues of the heart, and sanctifying them in a pure, unselfish, holy love.

The voyage from Miletus to Patara was probably in a small coasting vessel. At the latter port they found a larger seagoing vessel, on which they made the through journey to Tyre. At the latter place the Apostle and his companions hunted up some believers, whom they previously knew resided there. This is another evidence of affection and interest. Apparently the number of the interested was small, just as today; the twos and threes, sixes and sevens, are much more numerous than larger companies. The fewness did not hinder the Apostle from seeking them out, that he might encourage and strengthen them. Rather, we may say that in some respects the appreciation of the fact that the Lord's jewels are not numerous makes them all the more precious. In this little church were some who evidently had the gift of prophecy, as it was granted in the early church—foretelling future events, just as with the prophets of old, Isaiah, Jeremiah, etc., except that those of the earlier dispensation spoke evidently in a more public manner, while these latter had messages especially for the Apostle and the Church. The message that came to them was to the effect that the Apostle at Jerusalem would be caused to suffer; would be imprisoned, maltreated, etc., and on this account they urged him not to go. The Apostle tells us previously, that the spirit witnessed in various places that bonds and imprisonment awaited him; but, nevertheless, he understood it to be the divine will that he should go to Jerusalem, and that, hence, he would not hesitate, knowing that the Lord was able to work out his own good purposes, if he were obedient. We are not to understand this testimony of these local prophets to be a contradiction of the Apostle's understanding of the same holy spirit's leading; the one teaching him that he should go to Jerusalem, the other teaching that he should not go to Jerusalem. We are rather to understand that these prophets merely had from God a revelation to the effect that Paul would suffer violence in the city of the great King, and that on the strength of this information they themselves advised the Apostle not to go. But Paul, without disrespect, or in any degree impugning the truthfulness of their message, drew a different lesson from it—understood the Lord's message differently. He saw that this meant a trial of his faith, his zeal, his perseverance, and that for him to yield to these suggestions, through fear, would have been an evidence of his lack of confidence in God, since the Lord had himself revealed to him that he should go up to Jerusalem.

It may be wondered why the Apostle would feel so urgently desirous of going to Jerusalem, knowing in advance what to expect. We reply that he evidently realized that the work amongst the Gentiles was growing considerably, and that there was a feeling that there was a more or less clearly defined separation of interest and sympathy as between believing Gentiles and believing Jews, and that part of the Apostle's object in this visit was to counteract this tendency and to help cement the Church as one. He was taking with him contributions from the various churches amongst the Gentiles to the poor of the larger congregation at Jerusalem, a thank-offering to the Lord for the good things which had been sent to them through their Jewish brethren. These offerings would attest the love and fellowship of the Gentile believers, and help to convince the brethren at Jerusalem that those abroad had one and the same spirit as those with whom they were better acquainted in Palestine. Then again, in Paul's company were several Gentile representatives, as it were, of the grace of God amongst the Gentiles—noble brethren, whose meekness, patience, gentleness, long-suffering, brotherly kindness and various fruits of the spirit fully attested the work of grace amongst the Gentiles to be the same as amongst the Jews. Furthermore, the Apostle realized that some had, intentionally or unintentionally, misrepresented his position—claiming that he was an opponent of the Law and of the Jews. He was an opponent of neither; he loved the Jews as his brethren, and he loved the Law of Moses, realizing that it was just, perfect and good, and so great and wonderful a law that no fallen human being could possibly live up to all of its requisites, and that, therefore, whoever would be justified could not be justified by the Law, through obedience to it, but must be justified according to God's arrangement—justified by faith. During this visit he hoped to be able to show that he had no disrespect for the Law, but that as Jesus magnified it, held it up, and showed how great and wonderful a law it was, he, Paul, magnified the Law of God, the Law of Moses, and showed that it could be kept only reckonedly, by any of the fallen race, and then only by those who could have imputed to them the righteousness of Christ to make up for their blemishes and shortcomings.

Furthermore, he foresaw the complete fall of his nation from all divine favor into unbelief and a great time of trouble, just at hand, and he, doubtless, desired to make one further effort amongst the Jews to give a final testimony that might be helpful to some, hoping that his experience in the many years amongst the Gentiles might have brought him greater wisdom in knowing how to present the gracious message. We know that these were his sentiments respecting the condition of the Jews, because his Epistle to the Romans had already been written—after he left Ephesus, presumably at Corinth,—and in that Epistle to the Romans it will be remembered that in the ninth, tenth and eleventh chapters the Apostle clearly sets forth the stumbling of the whole Jewish nation, only a remnant taking hold upon the Lord Jesus, the rest being blinded until the fulness of the Gentiles should be come in. We remember his explanation of the olive tree, whose root was the promise made to Abraham, and whose branches were the individuals of the Jewish nation. The breaking off of these branches from divine favor left opportunity for grafting into this olive tree—of divine favor and participation in the covenant made with Abraham—of all of the Gentiles who should heartily accept the Redeemer. The Apostle had all these thoughts, then, clearly in his mind. He had no expectation of being able to turn Israel as a nation, but he did wish them to discern his love for them, and his earnest desire to assist them, that peradventure he might remove from the minds of the Apostles not only any prejudice they might, as Jews, have had against the Gentile converts, but that, additionally, he might assist some who had not yet made a decision, not yet gone into the condition of darkness, stumbling, etc. Here again love as brethren is manifest. The Apostle loved the Jewish nation with an intense love, as is witnessed by his declaration, "I could wish myself accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh." (Rom. 9:3.) Not that he would wish to suffer eternal torture for them, nor yet that he would wish to be cut off in the Second Death for them; but that he was willing to be cut off from participation in the glories of the Kingdom, as a member of the body of Christ, if thereby he could have brought his nation into that glorious position, the first right to which belonged to them as a people, until they rejected it.

The stay with the little company at Tyre lasted seven days, while their vessel was unloading its cargo and reloading another. As we read the account of how the disciples at Tyre, with their wives and children, accompanied the Apostle and his companions to the ship, and all kneeled in prayer on the shore, we say to ourselves that the spirit of discipleship was evidently the same everywhere in the early Church—just as warm and just as expressive among these probably less cultured ones at Tyre, as it was with the elders of the Church of Ephesus at Miletus. And we are glad to say that the household of faith today has many of the same characteristics of intense love for the brethren, even though they have not previously seen each other. We frequently think of this striking likeness when some of the friends, and sometimes their children, accompany us to the railway station to say "Goodbye." Truly by one spirit we are all baptized into the one body, and whoever lacks this spirit of fellowship, of oneness, is quite likely to become more and more cool and indifferent, until he loses the truth entirely; and whoever cultivates this spirit of fellowship and love for all the members of the body of Christ will find it growing, intensifying.

"Blest be the tie that binds
 Our hearts in Christian love;
The fellowship of kindred minds
 Is like to that above."

Mrs. M. J. Preston has put into poetic form the thought that we should speak our kind sentiments, and look them, and perform our kind services to one another, while we have the opportunity—and not let these opportunities go by, and leave our expressions until our friends are cold in death. She says:—

"What use for rope if it be not flung
Till the swimmer's grasp to the rock has clung?
What help in a comrade's bugle blast
When the peril of Alpine heights is past?
What need that the stirring paeon roll
When the runner is safe within the goal?
What worth is eulogy's blandest breath
When whispered in ears that are hushed in death?
No, no! if you have but a word of cheer
Speak it while I am alive to hear."

Leaving Tyre their vessel soon came to Ptolemais. There were a few friends at Ptolemais, and the day was spent in their company, and probably the partings again were full of expressions of sympathy; and then Caesarea, the Roman capital of Palestine, was reached. Philip the evangelist, one of the seven deacons originally appointed at Jerusalem, and who did a good work, it will be remembered, with the Ethiopian eunuch and at Samaria, was at this time apparently making Caesarea his home. We have no definite statement respecting the number of believers at the place, but evidently most of these groups of the Lord's people were few in number. . . . Apparently the Apostle's company tarried more days at Caesarea than they had intended, for finding that they would not be in time for the Passover the Apostle and his company were not in special haste to reach Jerusalem before the Pentecost season. It was while they tarried in the latter place that Agabus, a brother in the Lord, who had delivered important prophecies of future events, came to Caesarea and finding Paul took his girdle and therewith bound his own feet and hands and declared that thus Paul would be bound and delivered to the Gentiles. This form of prophecy, illustrating by signs, was not uncommon to the Jews. It will be remembered that Isaiah and Jeremiah and others of the prophets similarly acted out parts of their messages—thus, doubtless making them more impressive.

This last testimony from Agabus seems to have affected all of Paul's companions who, taking a view similar to that taken by others, now joined in a general appeal to the Apostle not to go further on the journey—to give it up, not to run foolishly into danger. His reply shows us how thoroughly convinced he felt that it was the Lord's will, and that his dear friends were conscientious, he does not for an instant dispute. His words are most touching: "What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart?" Here again we are reminded of the words of the poet:—

> "We share our mutual woes;
> Our mutual burdens bear;
> And often for each other flows
> The sympathizing tear."

But the Apostle was firm. He had not started on this journey without the full conviction and assurance that it was in the Lord's providence that he should take it; and he was not to be daunted by any of the circumstances that might arise. He well knew that all the powers of darkness would assail him in vain, except as the Lord should permit, and he well knew also that the Lord would permit, nothing to occur that would be to his real disadvantage. He would, therefore, go on conscientiously and courageously, and finish the work that the Father had given him to do. He would be sustained by his faith in the divine supervision of all his affairs, just as our Lord Jesus was; who, we remember, said to Pilate, "Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above."—John 19:11.

There are few such noble characters as Paul's, unmoved by threats or fears, strong in the Lord and in the power of his might, and ready not only to be bound for Christ's sake, but to die, if such should be the arrangement of the Lord's providence on his behalf. Let us each and all emulate this noble example of one who followed so closely in the footsteps of our Lord and Master. Let us be strong, not only in our consecration, but also in the taking of all the steps that the Lord's providence may lead us to take.

The Apostle's argument was successful. He infused new courage into the hearts of his colaborers, and they apparently resolved that if he were about to die or suffer they, too, would rejoice if the will of God respecting them eventuated in their death; and if they did not suffer personally they would, at least, have the honor of being companions of those who were misused for Christ's sake, and thus be to some extent the sharers in the blessing promised. (Heb. 10:32, 33.) The Apostle's companions saw the matter as he did, that it was the Lord's will; and they resolved to bow to it, notwithstanding that the Lord had given them information in advance which would have permitted them to turn back, or seek to save their lives. There is a very valuable lesson for all of the Lord's dear people in this word, "The will of the Lord be done." We should each seek to know the will of the Lord. If first of all our consecration be complete, even unto death, it will mean that we are seeking to know what the will of the Lord is respecting us, and it will mean that as we learn his will we will do it at any cost. It will mean that we will be on the outlook for the Lord's providences in all of our affairs, realizing that nothing happens by chance to those who are in covenant relationship with God, as members of the body of Christ,—that all things must work together for good to them. A fuller realization of the divine care over the elect would, doubtless, often guide our steps aright by directing the eye of faith to expect the Lord's leadings and to look for them in all matters that are of any importance.—Z. '03:124-127.

In Everything Give Thanks

Dear Lord, with sorrow, I confession make
That while with joy I suffer for Thy sake,
Yet in the cares with which my days abound,
Where I should smile, I fear I often frown.
In days gone by I've murmured o'er and o'er,
And unkind words have left me feeling sore;
Those whom I come in contact with each day,
Disturb me oft by things they do and say.

And thoughtless actions have left such a sting
I could not find it in my heart to sing.
Lord, I'll be honest with myself and Thee,
I have not been as sweet as I should be.
And I have said, "Too hard the wind doth blow,
Too hot the day, too much rain or snow,"
And tho' at times I've checked the hasty word,
Still, in my heart rebellious murmurs stirred.

And I have thought that I could grow in grace
Much better, were I in another's place.
Lord, to this whole long list I guilty plead;
And I am grieved o'er it, I am indeed;
And I am come to make a Vow to Thee,
That in the coming days, whate'er shall be
My portion, trials, cares, vexations, pain,
Dear Lord, I will not murmur nor complain.

And I will say when I arise each morn,
This day my Lord wants me to overcome,
"In everything give thanks," this is His Word;
And I will school my heart to sweet accord.
I'll thank Him for the sun, and for the rain;
I'll thank Him for the sorrow and the pain;
And in the things which try my patience so
I'll thank Him that I have a chance to show

How Sweet and Kind and Loving I can be,
How much His Holy Spirit dwells in me.
Dear Lord, I'll trust Thee tho' I do not know
Why I should walk the path I'm called to go.
I'll give Thee thanks whatever be the way
Which Thou shalt lead me in from day to day;
Relying on Thy grace to see me through,
Lord, this is what I've promised Thee to do.

—Z. '11:462.

When God Was Alone

"From everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God." (Psalm 90:2.) "I am Jehovah, that is My Name, and My glory will I not give to another." (Isaiah 42:8.) "To us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things." (1 Cor. 8:6.) "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one—Jehovah."—Deut. 6:4.

THESE and other Scriptures tell us of a personal God, the Father or Life Giver of all, the Great One who inhabiteth Eternity. St. Paul declares that to the heathen "there are lords many and gods many, but to us there is but one God, the Father," and one appointed Agent of His in dealing with humanity—one Lord Jesus Christ—"and that every tongue shall confess that Jesus, Messiah, is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."—Phil. 2:11.

The Scriptures tell us of "the beginning of the creation of God," hence there was a time before that beginning of creation, when Jehovah God was alone —"He that inhabiteth Eternity." Not even the great Michael was with Him, the great Messiah, whom He hath so highly honored and whom He declares He will still further honor throughout a glorious eternity. He was not with the Father before the beginning of creation, because He Himself was "the Beginning of the creation of God—the First-Born of every creature." (Rev. 3:14; Col. 1:15.) He was the first expression or manifestation of the Divine attributes.—John 1:18.

This mighty God, Jehovah, self-centered, self-contained, is ours, the same yesterday, today and forever. He changes not.

Divine Attributes Glorious

Every attribute of the Divine character was the same millions of years ago that it is today, but that character was unrevealed. Every step of creation was tended to display the Divine character more and more, and each successive step and development of creation has brought forth new creatures capable of comprehending the Eternal One. We deem it not unreasonable to assume that Jehovah's creative power will continue to be exercised throughout all coming time.

Astronomical photography now reveals nearly 125,000,000 suns, around which circle systems such as the one which circles around our sun, and of which our earth is a part. We deem it not unreasonable to assume, from the Scriptures, that the great work of ordering all these hundreds of millions of planets stretches forward into eternity, and that the work of Divine grace, begun on the planet "Earth," will be continued throughout the universe, not only in conjunction with the planetary systems we can discern, but probably with millions of planetary systems too far removed from us to be discerned even by photography.

Doubtless Divine methods in connection with other worlds and their inhabitants will display the manifold wisdom of God. For instance, we understand the Bible to indicate that while the permission of evil in the earth was wise, it will not necessarily be wise nor expedient for any reason to permit a similar reign of Sin and Death in any other of the millions of worlds, in connection with their ordering or development and their peopling with glorious creatures who will show forth the praises of the great Creator without passing through experiences with sin and death such as have been permitted in connection with the humanity of earth.

The Permission of Evil

Can we not see a reason for the permission of evil on the earth—for the permission of the reign of Sin and Death, which for six thousand years has apparently disgraced the Creator, degraded humanity, astonished the angels and constituted our race a groaning creation? Only when we discern that Messiah's Kingdom will surely bring order out of this confusion, do we begin to get the proper focus upon our subject and realize something of the greatness of our God.

From the standpoint of the completion of the Divine purposes in connection with humanity, and from that standpoint alone, can we see illustrated Divine Wisdom, Justice, Love and Power. The primary lesson was Justice—that sin brings suffering and eventually death.

The second lesson was that of Divine compassion, sympathy—Love. This lession was manifested in the sending of the Redeemer and in His subsequent reward of exaltation, and in His gathering of an "elect" Church to be His associates in glory and in the blessing of the redeemed race. The reign of glory, the reign of Messiah, soon to be introduced, will lift up poor humanity from sin and sorrow, from degradation and death, and give to each and all the fullest opportunity to return to human perfection and to Divine favor and everlasting life.

In all that work of human restitution, which will include the awakening of mankind from the sleep of death, the one great lesson will be the greatness of the divine power which will be exercised through Messiah, the God-like One, the Prince of Life, "the Prince of Glory," the Redeemer, the Regenerator of Adam and his race.

And finally, from the standpoint of the completion of Jehovah's great purposes and dealings with man, will stand revealed the foreknowledge and Wisdom of God, who knew the end from the beginning and who foresaw how even the permission of a reign of sin and death could be made eventually to work out to His own glory and to the blessing and instruction of His creatures on both the human and the angelic planes. Then will be revealed to all the glorious character of their Creator, and the necessity for His requirement of absolute righteousness and perfection.

Surely, the result eventually will be, as the Scriptures declare, that all shall learn righteousness, and hate iniquity, and that every creature in heaven and in earth and under the earth shall acclaim both Jehovah, who sitteth upon the Throne of the Universe, and the Lamb, the Redeemer, forever.

Were we to allow ourselves to speculate respecting the future—respecting the Divine purposes in relation to the millions of worlds around us, our speculations would run thus: These instructed and used of Jehovah in conjunction with the initial development of the Divine Plan in the earth will thereby be fitted and prepared to be the Divine Agents to other worlds. The Great Redeemer and His "elect" associates, after dealing with humanity for their uplift out of sin and death conditions, will surely be qualified for further service in other worlds: to "show forth the praises of Him who called them out of darkness into His marvelous light."

And what shall we say of humanity when perfected at the end of Messiah's glorious reign? Will not all be well prepared, not only to approve righteousness in themselves, but to tell in other worlds, to other races, the story of the fall and of the reign of Sin and Death resulting; and of the redemption accomplished by God's love; and of the great restitution; and of the lessons thus learned?

The Unchangeable One

The qualities of the Divine character which we have just considered—Wisdom, Justice, Love and Power—belonged to our Creator in the great eternity preceding creation. But there was no one at that time to appreciate God—it requires a full view of the perfected Plan of the Ages to make known to any and to all the glory of the Lord. As we have just seen, thus far the secret of the Lord and the glories of His character are known only to His "sons." . . . But the time nears when "the whole earth shall be full of the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the great deep." He and His glorious Government will then be "the desire of all nations;" "The glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together."—Hag. 2:7; Isa. 40:5.

St. Paul assures us that every feature of the Divine Plan which we see in process of execution was known to Jehovah from before the foundation of the world. He declares that these things God purposed in Himself, before the foundation of the world. The creative processes, which have been operating for thousands of years, were all surely elaborated in the mind of Jehovah before the creative work began. In that purpose angels had a part—of how many grades we may not surely know, but they are variously designated in the holy Scriptures as "angels, principalities and powers." Later came the creation of man, "a little lower than the angels" and crowned with earthly honor, dignity and power, in the image and likeness of his Creator's glorious power.

These creations varied not in degrees of perfection and imperfection. Each was perfect on its own plane. Each intelligent creature was a free, moral agent, and hence, whether on the angelic or human plane, was created in the likeness of God, unblemished, but with different capacities and abilities. Almghty God, infinite in Wisdom, Justice, Love and Power, purposed the orderly exercise of His infinite attributes, as a great Father, desirous of giving life and happiness to his creatures.

These intelligent ones were designated "Sons of God" so long as they maintained their attitude of perfect loyalty to Him, their Creator and Father. Not only was it the Divine intention thus to give pleasure to millions of creatures to be created, but it was also the Divine will to manifest to His creatures His own greatness and the perfection of His own goodness that they might enjoy Him and He enjoy them everlastingly.

We are not to understand that Almighty God was lonely in that great Eternity before creation began. On the contrary, human loneliness is largely because of human deficiency. What we lack we seek for in others. But the great Jehovah lacked nothing; He was complete in Himself; He needed not companionship to complete or to supplement His happiness. It was His pleasure to create, that His creatures might have joy by reflecting as a whole His Divine qualities implanted in their constitutions.

The wreck of the human race produced by sin He well foreknew. Nor did this wrecking of human hopes defeat, nor was it in danger of defeating the Divine purpose. It merely demonstrates to angels and to men the graces of the Divine character and shows unto all the more fully the qualities of God proper to be appreciated and copied.

The Seven-Sealed Scroll

When God would illustrate to us His own great Personality, when He would show to His creatures how he is working all things according to the counsel of His own will, He pictured it symbolically in the Book of Revelation. In that vision the Throne of the Eternal One is graphically portrayed as the Seat of Divine power and authority for the Universe, with angels as ministering spirits. Then is described a Scroll, in the right hand of Jehovah—in Divine power and keeping. That scroll, written inside and outside, was "sealed with seven seals," representing the complete secrecy of the Divine purposes related in that scroll. From before the foundation of the world it had been in the hand (in the power) of the great Eternal One. He had given hints respecting it and had caused it to be symbolized in the Law and to some extent to be described by the Prophets. But still it was a Hidden Mystery, because the Prophets understood not the things which they wrote; nor could any understand them until the Father's "due time," which He had purposed in Himself.

Not only was the Divine Programme thus sealed and safely secreted, but it was the Divine determination that it should be given only to the One who would demonstrate His worthiness to be Jehovah's honored Agent for the carrying out of those purposes predestinated before the world was. To become the honored Agent, the Representative of Jehovah, to carry out the Divine purposes, should be given only to the One who would demonstrate His worthiness to be the great Messiah, the great Deliverer, the great Prophet, Priest, Judge, King of Israel.

High as the Redeemer stood in the Divine counsels and fellowship before He came into the world to be Man's Redeemer, it was not then granted even to Him to know all the mysteries of the Divine Programme. But by virtue of His high station, His perfection, His obedience, the privilege was given to Him first to become man's Redeemer, at the cost of personal humiliation and death, and then, if faithful in this redemptive work, it should be His reward to be glorified, exalted to the Divine nature, and to execute the Divine Programme to its completion.—B:S.M.

Graves of Greediness

Numbers 11:4-34.

"The supplication of a righteous man availeth much in its working."—James 5:16.

THE ISRAELITES remained at Mt. Sinai about a year. This was a time of preparation. The people were learning important lessons, as a result of their new conditions, so different from those of Egypt. The component parts of the Tabernacle were prepared, and it was set up as a meeting place between God and the people. God was represented in it by the pillar of cloud, which rested upon the top of the Tabernacle, and which at night had a flame like a torch at its top.

God's presence on the inside of the Tabernacle was seen only by Moses and Aaron, in conjunction with their privileged services. He was represented by the glorious Shekinah brightness, which rested upon the Mercy Seat. Thus the Tabernacle became the center of the nation's life and interest in relation to their God, who was their Captain and Leader, and who communicated to them through the mediator of the Law Covenant—Moses.

The people had flocks and herds; and these would necessitate their being at some distance from the Camp, but the pillar of cloud by day and its fiery torch at night would always indicate the center of the Camp, and always guide their minds to the thought that they were God's adopted people, to whom, by first right, belonged the gracious promises made to Abraham.

Similarly, antitypical Israelites may realize that God has called them from the world to be His peculiar people, and may well exclaim, "God is in the midst of her, she shall not be disturbed"—overthrown! The center of our interest is our great Advocate, who on our behalf has entered into the Most Holy, and is proceeding with His great work of antitypical Atonement.

The Sin of Murmuring

Those who become the people of God, who accept Him as their Guide and Leader, should never murmur, never complain. To do so is to dispute the Divine Wisdom and the Divine promises, and to that extent to break their covenant of faith, obedience and loyalty. St. Paul reminds us that the murmuring of the Israelites on this occasion carries such a lesson to us (Hebrews 3:7-19; 4:1-11), which appears great or small to us, according to our standpoint and standard. The Lord's dealings with the Israelites show us that justice, love, mercy, loyalty to God and to principle are in the Divine estimation the highest qualities, and violations of these the most serious crimes. If this is not the way we have looked at matters, it behooves us to change our viewpoint and to take that of the Almighty.

This murmuring against the Lord was on the score of the manna, for which at first the people had been so thankful. They allowed their minds to grow so vexed that they wept like children as they thought of the meat and garlic and flesh pots of Egypt. They murmured against the Lord and against Moses in desiring that they might have back the conditions which they had left. Little did they comprehend the true situation. Had they been returned to the bondage in which they previously were, after even a year's experience in freedom, their lot would have seemed much more wretched than ever.

It was with Israel, however, as often with us, "Distance lends enchantment to the view." As they looked backward, they forgot the trials and difficulties of the bondage of Egypt. As they looked about them, they forgot their comforts, privileges, liberties under Divine leadership. Like peevish children, they reasoned not clearly.

Moses Too Greatly Burdened

The result of the murmuring was severe upon Moses. He was the people's representative before the Lord, and the Lord's representative before the people. Murmuring against the Lord in their experiences meant murmuring against Moses also. Heart-broken, that Prophet sought the Lord, pleading that his burden was too heavy, that the people cried to him as children to a father, and that he could endure it no longer. He rehearsed that the Lord had promised to take this people as His people and to bring them to the land promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. He urged, therefore, that if this burden must remain with him it would be better for him to die: "Kill me, I pray Thee, out of hand, if I have found favor in Thy sight; and let me not see my wretchedness."

Then it was that God directed the institution of the Jewish Sanhedrin—seventy of the heads or the Elders of the people, to be the court of judges, responsible to the people and to deal with them, to hear their murmurings and to counsel them properly. In this arrangement, while Moses was still the head of the nation, the seventy Elders shared his responsibility before the people, and would more or less, therefore, be his defenders with the people.

By Divine direction Moses made out the list of these Elders, and directed them to meet him at the Tabernacle. All but two of them came. There God manifested the honor he had bestowed upon Moses as the head of the people by communion with him, and then, as foretold, placed a share of the responsibility of leadership upon the seventy. This was indicated by their miraculous prophesying. This prophesying became a sign to the Elders themselves and to all who heard it. Even the two who remained in the camp prophesied at the same time. The Lord thus indicated that they should be co-laborers with and under Moses in respect to the guidance and direction of the people.

Quail in Over-Supply

God then sent word to the Israelites through Moses, the message probably being conveyed through the seventy Elders selected from all the different tribes, that He was about to send them flesh food, such as they had been murmuring for.

He declared He would send a thirty-day's supply for the whole people. Even Moses was astonished, though he trustfully gave the message. Under the Lord's providence, a strong wind across the Red Sea drove thousands of small birds, quail, to the vicinity of Israel's Camp and for a considerable distance all around it. As a result, the people ate freely, and prepared dried quail for future use for a full thirty-days' supply, as the Lord had said. Two days and nights they ceased not to gather in the quail.

Some agnostics have questioned this statement, thinking it to be a declaration that the birds fell in a solid mass two cubits high. The proper thought is that the birds, driven by the wind across the sea, were so fatigued by their flight that they flew low down, about two cubits in height above the ground, where they were easily caught with the hand or hit with sticks and captured. A writer on conditions in that vicinity says:

"These quail cannot sustain themselves long on the wing when exhausted. They would be easily taken when they flew at a height of about two cubits (three feet) above the ground."

Those who had been murmuring discontentedly suddenly got their desire for flesh food; and they ate it so greedily and so much of it that an insidious pestilence broke out amongst them, a fever from over-eating, called "a fire from the Lord." Many died and were buried there, and thus the place was called "Kibroth-Hattaavah," which signifies "Graves of Greediness." Thus did the Lord permit the murmurers, the unthankful, to do themselves injury and to cut themselves off from further opportunities for murmuring.

The most happy condition of mind conceivable is the one of full rest and confidence in the Lord—satisfied with God's appointments and provisions. And this is especially appropriate to the Spiritual Israelites, and particularly the Royal Priesthood, who have made a full surrender to the Lord, a Covenant by sacrifice, which includes all earthly rights and interests. Happy is it for such if they can sing with the spirit and with the understanding also:

"Content whatever lot I see,
Since 'tis my God that leadeth me."

The spirit of discontent looks away from the Heavenly Manna of Divine provision, longing for other food of their own provision or of other earthly supply. The Lord grants such an opportunity of feasting to the full on what they are desiring, and as a result, the murmurers cease from being members of the Lord's family and have no further opportunity of partaking of the Manna He provides in sufficient quantity.

To give an illustration: the Bible supplies the Manna of Divine Truth. The Truth needs to be gathered, and to be ground and to be baked, but it is God's provision. It is wholesome, it is nutritious, it is the very thing that we, as the people of God, need for our strengthening and perfecting. Yet some crave the flesh pots of Egypt—the world's theories. Then He allows these to come within their reach. They fill themselves . . . and as a result perish as New Creatures, cease to be the people of God, cease to walk in the Master's footsteps. They are consumed by the fire, or fever, which the errors they crave produce.

Graves of Greediness

Greed, selfishness, stands connected with sin of every kind. It leads to every form of immorality, to satisfy its selfish propensities. It leads to injustice and untruthfulness in its endeavor to acquire a large share of the blessings of God. It leads to anger, malice, hatred, envy, strife and murder in its endeavor to get and to hold a superabundant share of this world's goods. Selfishness is thus unrighteousness, and "all unrighteousness is sin."

As we think of the graves of greediness filled with the Israelites, we are reminded of how many Spiritual Israelites have made similar mistakes. Greedy for the things of this world, they have neglected their Covenant with the Lord and the higher interests of the life to come. Jesus said that the thorns that sprang up amongst the wheat and choked it were the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches; in other words, greediness.

Oh, how much all the followers of Jesus should be on guard against this spirit of the world! It is not our suggestion that none should look out properly to have a reasonable share of the blessings and comforts of the present life. The danger is that of setting our hearts upon these things, coveting them and serving them, in an idolatrous manner, and thus causing our spiritual interment, over which might well be inscribed "Graves of Greediness."

The Text of this Study

The text assigned evidently is meant to apply to the prayer of Moses for help and relief. "The supplication of a righteous man availeth much in its working." God granted the prayer of Moses, which was of a proper kind in that it was requesting help whereby the will of God might be fully submitted to, that the people might be rightly instructed to bow to the Divine arrangements. It availed much; it brought the desired result; it was in harmony with the Divine will.

On the other hand, the prayer of the unrighteous will avail much also in an opposite direction. The murmurings of the people were classed as their prayers. They got what they desired; but with it they got, not the Divine blessing, but a punishment. Let us take heed to how we pray, and that we pray for things in harmony with the Divine will. Thus will our prayers bring blessings upon our heads, and not injury.

Selfish Prayers Answered

We know of many prayers answered; some of these were uttered selfishly, not with the desire to know and to do the Lord's will, but with the desire to have the Lord do according to the human will and its selfish desire. Such prayers are always dangerous. God sometimes answers them.

We note one instance told us by a mother. She was a true Christian woman and had given her son to the Lord; but when he fell seriously sick and lay at death's door and the physicians said that he could not recover, the mother went before the Lord in prayer and earnestly pleaded, not that God's will should be done, but that her will might be done—that her son's life might be spared. Almost miraculously, she says, her boy began to recover. For a time she rejoiced that she had had a triumph.

Later on, however, she learned a very bitter lesson. The son grew to manhood, but was far from a comfort to her. He had a vicious character, which often brought the mother pain and tears. She said afterwards, "I have rued that prayer, which was contrary to God's will, and which He answered according to my will. I see better now. I have learned my lesson. Henceforth I will seek to know and to do the Lord's will, and will pray that His will, not mine, be done in all my affairs. My selfishness brought me years of misery, which I had assumed would be years of pleasure and comfort." How careful we should be to "abide in Him and in His Word"!—Z. '13: 267-269.

Nobility Conquers Meanness

Nehemiah 6.

"The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?"—Psa. 27:1.

AFTER many difficulties Nehemiah's work had almost reached success when a great wail of distress went out. The poor Jews had been giving all of their time to the repairing of the walls and had thus cut off their income from other sources. In their zeal they went into debt in mortgages on their property. When the tax collectors came and the interest became due they were unable to meet these and so, destitution staring them in the face, a great wail went up. Disasters spread rapidly and a food riot was barely averted.

Nehemiah looked into the matter and found that the wealthy Jews had advanced money to their poor neighbors on mortgages at exorbitant interest rates, and they were thus profiting by the calamities of their brethren. He called them together and had a plain but kind talk with them respecting the brotherly obligations required by the Law—"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." He gave them a practical exemplification of his good exhortations. The wealthy Jews were abashed. They acknowledged the injustice of their course and rectified matters. Here we see the power of noble character and good example in its influence upon others. As custom and example foster unjust methods and usage makes right in the minds of many, so likewise examples of justice are powerful in opposition to wrong. Thus every Christian owes it to himself and to God and the principles of righteousness which he represents, not only to take the proper stand, but also to let this stand for righteousness be known to others as reproofs of unrighteousness.

Treachery and Slander in Opposition

No sooner had the prevailing difficulties been successfully combated than a new foe arose. The outside enemies, perceiving that the wall was about finished, and that only the hanging of the gates remained to complete the defenses of Jerusalem, tried new tactics. They professed a desire to reconsider the whole matter—to meet with Nehemiah for discussions of their business and fresh examination of his papers of authority from the King. But he replied that his work was a great one, very important and that he could not take time for discussion. He had time to discuss with his brethren; he had time to show them as the people of God the right and wrong of each important question, but he had no time to dispute about outside matters while his important mission was unfinished.

There is a lesson in this for Christians. We should always have time to discuss God's Word and His love with the brethren. . . . But surely while important interests of God's cause are needing our attention we have no time to give to discussing outside questions which St. Paul denominates "science falsely so called." We are to have the same mind on the subject as St. Paul expressed, saying, "I have determined to know nothing amongst you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified." Anything relating to Jesus as God's anointed Son, the Messiah, or anything relating to His crucifixion and the hopes built thereon, St. Paul was ready to discuss at any time. The defense of this cause and subject was his special business in life. Although he was well educated and well informed on topics of general interest, he acted as though he were ignorant of those things that he might give all his influence and time to the one paramount matter—to the cause for which he was an ambassador.

Four times the outsiders sought to converse with Nehemiah; four times he declined, not only because of the importance of the work he was doing, but because additionally he perceived that they were merely urging this as a pretext for the conference which was to be held in a village twenty miles from Jerusalem on neutral ground, and during Nehemiah's absence they might overpower the garrison of Israel and destroy the work already accomplished, or they might do him violence at the conference, or both.

Evil Speaking and Slander

Finally, the enemies resorted to the usual weapons of slander. They did not charge directly that Nehemiah sought to make himself king of the Jews, with Jerusalem its capital, and that he was secretly employing men to speak favorably for him amongst the people, but in an open letter sent declared that these things were commonly reported amongst all the people—they were "common gossip;" and by way of giving personality and force the letter added, "And Gesham saith that thou and the Jews think to rebel, for which cause thou buildest the wall; and that thou desirest to be their king."

This message was sent by Sanballat in a complimentary way as though he were a friend and hoped to save Nehemiah from trouble with the king, and he still urged him to come to the counsel which was to be held for his interest. Nehemiah's answer was quite to the point: "There are no such things done as thou sayest: thou feignest them out of thine own heart." The object evidently was to alarm the Jews and to thus discourage the completion of their work.

How cruel are the multitudinous methods of slander! How contrary they are to everything that is right, not to mention the highest of all standards, Christian love! Nevertheless, how frequently God's people are ensnared by the spirit of slander. How grievous are the wrongs thus accomplished; how unbearable is the injustice inflicted; how dreadful are the responsibilities incurred! Assuredly **those who lend their lips to slander are correspondingly opening their hearts to the Adversary.** Not only is evil speaking condemned in the Scriptures but also by all noble men and women, even though heathen. Even when Nehemiah's life was threatened, his consciousness of loyalty to God and of Divine guidance kept him without fear. We close by quoting the poem, "Three Gates of Gold":—

"If you are tempted to reveal
A tale someone to you has told
About another, let it pass,
Before you speak, three gates of gold—

"Three narrow gates—First, 'Is it true?'
Then, 'Is it needful?' In your mind
Give the truthful answer. And the next
Is last and narrowest, 'Is it kind?'

"And if, to reach your lips at last
It passes through these gateways three,
Then you may tell the tale, nor fear
What the result of speech may be."

—Z. '11: 427, 428.

The Lord My Shepherd

Psalm 23:1-6.

Golden Text—"The Lord is my shepherd: I shall not want."

IN THE precious and true sentiments of this Psalm, David doubtless took great consolation in the midst of his temptations and trials, and of the realization of his own infirmities and shortcomings. As he looked back to his early shepherd life and remembered his own care for the dependent sheep of his flock, the thought of the Lord's similar care over his people came to mind. And, doubtless, with this realization of the Lord's goodness and care, came also a renewed determination on David's part to be henceforth a true sheep, that he might always remain under the shepherd's care.

While such was the significance of these words to David, to us, the Church under the care of the Anointed Jesus, our Good Shepherd, they mean more; for, as the Lord's inspired prophet, David puts these words into the mouth of all of the Lord's "little flock" of consecrated followers who obediently hearken to his voice and who in meek humility take comfort both in his chastening rod and in his blessed staff of promise and hope.

To those who are not in this attitude these words do not apply. The Lord is not a shepherd of wayward goats (however, he may permit the common blessings of sun and rain to come to all): the proud and the self-willed have no part in his tender care; and those who are truly his sheep and who can therefore claim his care and leading are, as he tells us (Luke 12:32), only a "little flock," to whom "it is the Father's good pleasure to give the kingdom." And it is to the kingdom—the Millennial Kingdom of God, to be established over all the earth—that the Good Shepherd is thus leading his consecrated flock. Such may truly say—

Verse 1. "The Lord is my shepherd: I shall not want." They shall have all needful instruction, all needful grace and comfort and discipline and training and care, and such measure of temporal good as will be most conducive to their highest spiritual and everlasting blessing. In fact, all things shall work together for good to the sheep of the Lord's pasture —to the called according to his purpose.—Rom. 8:28.

Verse 2 assures us that our hunger and thirst after truth and righteousness shall be satisfied—that we shall be bountifully fed and sweetly refreshed with the meat in due season and the water of life.

Verse 3—"He restoreth my soul," etc., refers to our present **justification** through faith in the atoning sacrifice of Christ; for we are therefore now reckoned as having passed from death unto life, although the times of restitution have not yet begun. And being thus reckoned righteous, we are led by the Good Shepherd in the paths of righteousness and peace "for his name's sake"—because we are his, and because we trust in his name, in his merit, the merit of his sacrifice freely given for our sins.

Verse 4—"Yea, [although I am not actually so restored, yet by faith in the promise, through Christ, I do so reckon myself, even] though [like all the rest of the dying world] I [still] walk through the valley of the shadow of death, [I was born in this valley and shall die in it, yet] I will fear no evil [no failure of thy sure covenant]; for thou art with me, [even here, and] thy [chastening] rod and thy [faithful] staff [of promise and hope], they comfort me."

Verse 5 refers to the bountiful supply of soul-satisfying truth—the meat in due season, and the full cup of joy and gladness—prepared and spread before the household of faith even here in the midst of this valley of the shadow of death and in the presence of our enemies—Satan and his messengers, who vainly seek to stumble the feet of Christ and to subvert our faith. It refers also to our anointing with the holy spirit as members of the body of Christ.

Verse 6. In view of such present bounty and blessing, well may we rest in the assurance that goodness and mercy shall follow us all the days of our life—both of this present life and also of that which is to come: and that if, as obedient sheep, we continue to follow the leading of the Good Shepherd we shall eventually dwell in the house of the Lord forever, as members of the royal, divine family, as the bride and joint-heir of Jehovah's dear Son.—Z. '92:123.

KERNELS KERNELS KERNELS

We are to be sober. Yet we are not to be stupid—stolid. We should remember that the Lord is giving us this knowledge to be used, and we should use it more and more. As we more clearly see our imperfections, we should watch and be sober, and we shall accordingly be circumspect, we shall be helpful to others.—Z. '13:182.

◆

The followers of Jesus, the pupils in his school, are to take the highest standard of excellence for their pattern,—their loving Creator. They are to strive for perfection such as his. They are to attain it in their hearts, and, so far as possible, outwork it in every thought and word and deed of their fallen flesh.—Z. '10: 58.

◆

The kindly, the generous, seem always to have the divine approval; hence we all should be on the alert to cultivate these qualities in our hearts and lives, and as parents and preceptors of the rising generation we should endeavor to cultivate this same quality in those under our care, having in mind the fact that such will be the more likely and the more ready to receive divine blessings of various kinds.—Z. '07: 73.

◆

The experiences of life as they come should be accepted **thankfully** as under the Divine will: and **thanks should be rendered for them, whether agreeable or disagreeable to the natural man,** "For this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." This is what would please God. This is living up to the high privileges his grace has provided for us. Let us seek more and more to live up to the very highest pinnacle of our privileges. Proportionately we will find ourselves nearer to the Lord, and developing in his character likeness and rejoicing in hope of the glory of God and the precious things which he has in reservation for those that love him.—Z. '09:188.

◆

Those who have the organ of Self-esteem small and that of Conscientiousness large are prone to see clearly all of their recognized imperfections and to suffer much from self-condemnation. Such persons should endeavor to see matters as they really are and to judge themselves justly. In fact, all judgment should be just; for justice is the very foundation of the Divine Throne. Therefore we should endeavor to be just in our judgments to the very best of our ability.—Z. '17: 308.

◆

We cannot serve two masters; we cannot espouse the cause of truth and the cause of error as well; nor can we retain the friendship of God and of the advocates of error also. Who is on the Lord's side? let them rally around the Lord's standard. All told, they will only be a "little flock." Like Gideon's band, the company gathered by the proclamation of the harvest message of truth must be tested and sifted until only the loyal, faithful, true hearted, brave and valiant soldiers of the cross remain; and to these, though their numbers be small, will the laurels of victory belong when truth and righteousness finally prevail. Let no man boast of numbers now when the highest interests of the elect of God are all bound up with the faithful few, to whom it will be the Father's good pleasure to give the kingdom.—Z. '91.118.

◆

Oh, how blessed to be the people of God! even in the present life the reward of His favor is beyond computation.—Z. '13:179.

◆

God alone knows how each is struggling: He alone knows those who are fighting courageously day by day to the end. We are not competent to judge. St. Paul says, "With me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of any man's judgment; yea, I judge not mine own self. . . . He that judgeth me is the Lord." (1 Cor. 4:3, 4.) We may not even too hastily judge ourselves to be worthy of the Second Death. It is to be left to God as to whether we are overcomers or not. With this in view it is our duty to strive earnestly and not to be discouraged ourselves nor to discourage others, but rather to uphold them and help them to greater courage, to greater zeal in the service of our Lord.—Z. '12: 54.

◆

Even though the advanced Christian has reached the place where he is enabled to reckon his flesh and its will completely dead and buried, he nevertheless has need continually, with the Apostle, to re-examine the matter, lest the flesh should become alive again. This was the Apostle's method: he says: "I keep my body under (dead, buried, in complete subjection to the new mind), lest having preached to others I myself should be a castaway." (1 Cor. 9: 27.) This keeping of the body under, this watching of it lest its will become alive again, is a constant necessity to those who would be "overcomers."—Z. '01: 70, 71.

◆

Love begets love. If we would open another's heart, we have to lay bare our own. God acts upon this principle; and God manifest in flesh was an embodiment of it. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." (1 John 4:10.) This is the law of love.—Z. '91:121.

◆

There is a time to pray and also a time to act and thus to co-operate with God who is answering our prayers. When the Lord's time for answering our prayers has come and we know it, it is for us to manifest our faith in him by going forward. Too many spiritual Israelites, after hearing the Lord's message, instead of going forward in obedience are disposed to tarry and pray to the Lord that he give them some special message not common to others. Such through weakness of faith are in danger of losing their standing. "Without faith it is impossible to please God;" and obedience is merely a demonstration of faith.—Z. '01: 382, 383.

◇

Let us remember, that "Your Adversary the devil goeth about as a ferocious lion, seeking whom he may devour—whom resist," says the Apostle. We may be sure that he attends all the Conventions; and that his influence is continually exerted to sow discord, strife and every other work of the flesh and of the devil. He works upon our imperfect heads and hearts. "We are not ignorant of his devices," writes the Apostle, and we well know that wrong-heartedness is far more dangerous than wrong-headedness. The latter the Lord has promised to protect us from, but not from the former: we must be "pure in heart."—Z. '07: 270.

◇

"So (important) is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature, and (or when) it is set on fire of Gehenna." (James 3: 6.)

Here, in strong, symbolic language, the Apostle points out the great and bad influence of an evil tongue—a tongue set on fire (figuratively) by Gehenna (figuratively). For a tongue to be set on fire of Gehenna signifies that it is set going in evil by a perverse disposition, self-willed, selfish, hateful, malicious, the sort of disposition which, in spite of knowledge and opportunity, unless controlled and reformed, will be counted worthy to be destroyed—the class for whom the "Second Death," the real "lake of fire," the real Gehenna, is intended. One in that attitude may by his tongue kindle a great fire, a destructive disturbance, which, wherever it has contact, will work evil in the entire course of nature. —Z. '01: 34.

◇

The characters which the Lord loves and chooses are those which are unselfish, generous as well as just.—Z. '07: 56.

◇

Let our lives be a daily and hourly struggle to overcome the evil that is in ourselves, to purify and beautify our own characters. Thus shall we be the more fully prepared to strive faithfully and steadily against the foes without—to war a good warfare to the end.—Z. '95: 202.

◇

Our Father leads us out into various experiences in order to have our senses exercised. Our experiences and providences cause us to think, to appreciate, to study, to inquire; and as we do so, we develop by means of these experiences and providences. We are led to consider, What does this experience mean, and what does that one teach?—Z. '13: 293.

◇

Truth—that grand system of truth comprised in the divine Plan of the Ages—is an ample shield and buckler to all who in simplicity of heart receive it and prove faithful to it. It is the armor of God which the Apostle urges all the faithful to put on—to appropriate, to meditate upon and to store up the truth in mind and heart—that they may be able, by its use, to withstand error and evil in every form presented to them in this evil day.—Z. '04: 75.

◇

Irreverence sometimes manifests itself conspicuously in prayer, where the one who should be a worshiper, overflowing with thanksgiving for mercies received, undertakes to give direction to the great King of kings concerning the management of his work far and near and in all particulars. The Lord does not smite down such today, and make public examples of them for their irreverence, but we may be sure that, as the Apostle says, such petitions will receive no consideration of the Lord. (James 1: 7.)—Z. '03: 379.

◇

That the Church in this sifting and proving time will be individually tested as to character, as well as to faith, is certain.—Z. '95, 290.

◇

The only sample of total depravity of which we have any clear knowledge is Satan himself,—the father of lies and of every wicked work. But general depravity is general enough; and, being general, no man should have any difficulty in finding to some extent the portion of it which he himself has inherited, as well as discerning it in others. True, although the depravity is general, it is not alike general. Some are more depraved than others; some have the original moral likeness of God less blurred and defaced than others. In harmony with the Scripture statement that we are born in sin, every discerning person whose eyes have been opened to what depravity is can note the evidences of it even in childhood. Self-will and passionate obstinacy are often to be noted in infants but a few weeks old, and very patient should the parent be, as well as very attentive and thorough the correction of his child, when he remembers that the very traits which need correction have come down to the child from himself. Thus the Christian parent should be not only the most thorough in the matter of training up a child in the way it should go, but also the most patient, considerate and kind in giving this correction.—Z. '97: 32.

◇

We are sure that those who have built their faith according to the direction of the Lord's Word, upon the proper foundation, and with the proper materials, the gold, silver, precious stones of divine truth, the Word of God,—these will never fail, will never be stumbled, but will come off conquerors. But we also know that this class is a remarkably small one.—Z. '03: 212.

◇

Hindrances and difficulties and obstacles become the greatest helps and aids under God's providences to those who are of the right condition of heart. —Z. '05: 76.

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A WINTON

Old Corn Gems

NUMBER EIGHTY-NINE

"And they did eat of the OLD CORN of the land on the morrow after the Passover . . . and the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the OLD CORN of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year." Joshua 5:11-12.

A SAFE RULE

"WHERE A BROTHER GIVES AN INTERPRETATION OF A SCRIPTURE WHICH DIFFERS FROM THAT GIVEN BY BROTHER RUSSELL, AND BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION SEEMS REASONABLE AND IN HARMONY WITH THE PLAN OF GOD, THEN WE BELIEVE IT A SAFE RULE TO FOLLOW BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION, FOR THE REASON THAT HE IS THE SERVANT OF THE CHURCH, SO CONSTITUTED BY THE LORD FOR THE LAODICEAN PERIOD; AND THEREFORE WE SHOULD EXPECT THE LORD TO TEACH US THROUGH HIM. WHERE THERE ARISES A DOUBT IN THE MIND AS TO WHICH INTERPRETATION IS CORRECT, THEN IT IS ALWAYS SAFER TO RESOLVE THAT DOUBT IN FAVOR OF BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION. WE BELIEVE SUCH TO BE IN HARMONY WITH THE LORD'S WILL." Z. '18:51.

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A Christian Soldier's Battle

Gal. 5:15-26; 6:7, 8.

MANY sing, "Onward, Christian Soldier, battling for the right," who but imperfectly comprehend the meaning of their words, the signification of the Christian battle. But it is a battle of freedom in the highest and best sense of the expression. . . .

Civilization, basing itself partly on an appreciation of the principles of justice and partly upon the lessons of history, attempts so to shape the laws of the land as to secure the rights of all. It is not surprising, however, that—with selfishness a ruling element in all hearts by nature—neither the laws nor the practices of the most civilized are perfect: that is to say, the largest amount of protection and the largest amount of individual liberty are not always secured. When we consider that the lawmakers and executives are all imperfect, biased, selfish, we are properly amazed at the amount of justice we find in the world and the amount of liberty. If all the lawmakers were saints, fully in harmony with the divine arrangements and merely limited by the imperfection of their mortal bodies, we could not expect much better laws than we find in the world; and were it not that the Scriptures clearly show us that the Church, as kings and priests of the future, will be absolutely perfect in every respect and backed by divine wisdom and power, we could not anticipate for the Millennium anything much better than we now possess in the way of governmental machinery.

As we compare the various degrees of civilization throughout the world, and note that the wisest and best laws and wisest and best execution of them and the greatest true liberty of the people within reasonable bounds are found in those nations which have most reverenced the divine message, the Bible, it is a strong argument that the Word of God has not only influenced the "little flock," who take it most seriously, and lay aside every weight and hindrance and worldly ambition to run with patience in the footsteps of Jesus, but it has influenced the minds of many who have never taken this step of full consecration. In a word, the liberty wherewith Christ makes free is not the liberty of license but the liberty of reason, of justice and of love; and in proportion as any one has received the spirit of the divine teaching, in that same proportion he is a free-man. We thank God, therefore, for the measure of national liberty which prevails throughout the world, even while we see clearly from the prophecies of the Scriptures, as well as written on the pages of the daily press, that a great misinterpretation of liberty is rapidly spreading throughout the world, which will eventually wreck the present civilization in anarchy. . . .

The Fight for Liberty

All the liberty there is in the world today has been paid for; none of it has been attained without sacrificers. Why? Because selfishness is so entrenched in the race that those who possess power, authority, privilege, opportunity, would hold these for themselves to the disadvantage of others, to the enslavement of others, were not the rights and liberties fought for. Looking back over the history of nations, without approving of wars, every reasoning mind can see, nevertheless, that only through wars have liberties come to the race. The mistake that is being made by many today is the supposition that humanity would ever be able to attain the condition of absolute equality and unselfishness through laws or wars or any other means within the power of Adam's race.

The Scriptures point out to us that there is a limit beyond which we must not expect selfish humanity to make progress—that any progress beyond that limit must come from on high, through the establishment of the Kingdom of God's dear Son; that while wealth and influence and talents will yield to the pressure of the masses for their own protection and aggrandizement, they will not yield everything, but would permit the entire social structure to dissolve rather than to submit to a general equalization, as is the aim of Socialism. Hence Socialism, while not intending anarchy, will produce anarchy; while striving for greater liberty and universality of blessings of earth it will effect a wreck of all these. Thanks be to God that his programme is that on this wreck of present institutions he will establish the true reign of liberty on the plane of love, under the guidance of the Master and his joint-heirs.

The Christian's Fight

If the world's liberty has required fighting for, much more may we expect a battle for those who take the still higher ground of the Bible, and who strive for the "liberty wherewith Christ makes free." (Gal. 5:1.) For although this very Scripture declares that Christ gives this freedom, the Word shows us that he gives it only to those who desire it and who will fight for it. Their battle is not to be with carnal weapons which the law of love forbids, yet their warfare is to be mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds of error. Against what, then, do they battle? We answer that their chief fight is against the fallen tendencies of their own beings. They find that, through the long centuries of the fall, sin has become inbred and entrenched in their flesh to such a degree that it necessitates a warfare in the new mind. They get the new mind or disposition through hearkening to the word of the Lord, . . . through a full consecration of all to the divine service—to the service of righteousness and truth. The making of the consecration on the part of the believer was his entering upon the career of a good soldier of the Lord Jesus. It was his engagement to battle against sin and selfishness everywhere, according to the rules laid down by the chief Captain.

To the surprise of every soldier he finds that some of his greatest battles are within. True he finds the world an opponent to his full devotion of time and talent and influence to the service of the Truth. The world is not prepared for such an extreme, which more or less reproves it of sin and selfishness: the world, therefore, sneers and cries "hypocrite," "saint," etc., and seeks to turn aside the consecrated. To be a good soldier he must be prepared for this and have on the sandals of preparation afforded by the Gospel, else the difficulties strewn in his path by worldly opposition would soon make him so footsore that he would be disposed to turn back notwithstanding the term of his enlistment—"even unto death." The Adversary also is a foe who must be reckoned with, and whose subtle attacks may be encountered in various ways. The Christian soldier has the assurance of his Captain that all the arts of the Adversary are known to him, and that all his interests shall be guarded so long as he is loyal to his Captain and faithful to his consecration and enlistment.

But, as we have said, the chiefest of all the Christian soldier's opponents is the human foe—the weaknesses and cravings and demands and subtle persecutions, etc., of the fallen conditions of his own mind and body. To his surprise he finds himself a slave to his own weaknesses, and that he must battle daily, hourly almost, for victory, in order to attain fully the liberty wherewith Christ makes free indeed. From this standpoint all battles against our own fleshly weaknesses, our own selfish instincts and propensities, are battles for liberty, battles for right, battles on the Lord's side. Our great Captain is not so much wishing us to fight his battles as wishing us to fight the good fight of faith in ourselves, and in this matter he is ready to assist us, and without him we can do nothing. True, our battles extend beyond ourselves sometimes when, either amongst the Lord's brethren and the Church, we need to battle for the Truth, the right, or in our contact with the world we may sometimes find hostilities necessary.

"If Ye Bite and Devour"

2-23 Amongst the Lord's people, even in the apostle's day, there was a tendency at times to fight each other rather than to fight the devil and the spirit of the world and the weaknesses within. The organs of combativeness and destructiveness, which would serve a Christian soldier in good stead if directed against his own weaknesses and blemishes, are sadly out of place when, ignoring his own weaknesses, he merely becomes contentious with the brethren—often over nothing, or over questions whose importance he exaggerates, because of his contentious spirit. Such should remember the Scriptural statement that greater is he that ruleth his own spirit than he that taketh a city. (Prov. 16:32.) The Apostle refers to that misdirection of Christian energy which bites and devours one another, and tends to the destruction of all that is spiritual amongst the Lord's people. Not that the Apostle favored slackness as respects the important principles of the divine revelation, for he himself urged that we contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. (Jude 3.) But this earnest contending is not to be done in a biting and devouring manner—it is to be with patience and long suffering, brotherly kindness, love.

10 The Lord's people have enlisted as New Creatures, spirit-begotten, to walk [to live] not after the flesh but after the Spirit, and must continually recognize this fact, and keep watch that they are walking in line with the spirit of truth, and must know that in so doing they will not be fulfilling the desires of their fallen flesh. The Apostle states this as **a positive rule,** without exception, that the flesh, the natural inclinations, tendencies, lusts or desires, are contrary to the Spirit, and likewise the Spirit desires are contrary to the flesh. These two desires being opposed one to the other we cannot gratify both, and whichever is gratified it will be so at the expense of the other. If we ever want to attain to the true liberty wherewith Christ makes free we should know that it can only be by a persistent warfare of the new mind against every sinful tendency and inclination of the old nature. It is not the new will warring against the old, for the old will we have reckoned dead. It is the new will warring against the flesh, which the old will used to control, and which flesh still has its evil tendencies.

The new will, therefore, needs all the sustaining strength and assistance which it can secure. Much of these are provided for it as food nourishment, strength, through the Word of God, whose exceeding great and precious promises are given in order that the new will may be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might through faith, and conquer in all of its battles with the flesh.

The Apostle's declaration, "Ye cannot do the things which ye would," is in full accord with all our experiences. We can sometimes do as we would in some things, we can gain the victory over the flesh; but there are certain weaknesses, failings, blemishes in our flesh which are so powerful that the new mind never gets as complete a mastery over them as it desires. Nevertheless in all the battles being waged the new mind grows stronger and stronger while the flesh grows weaker and weaker. The Scriptural proposition, however, is that we must expect to have more or less of these battles **until our dying moments.** Thank God that will be the end of the strife, for in the resurrection we are promised new bodies, perfect, complete, in which the new mind will be able to exercise itself without conflict. That is the rest which remains for the people of God, and associated with it will be various other blessings, honors, dignities and responsibilities which the Lord has promised.

"Ye Are Not Under the Law"

The Jewish Law was prominent before the minds of the early Church, because the majority had come to Christ through Judaism. The Law had its requirements and exactions and condemnations, and it was difficult for the early Church to comprehend the liberty which was properly theirs in Christ. Their minds would waver as between the gift of grace in Christ and the rewards of the Law, and hence they were continually in trouble because of a realization of the imperfection of their flesh. The Apostle urges the point that those who have accepted Christ are no longer under the Law Covenant, hoping for eternal life under its impossible conditions. The Law could only approve that which was perfect, and while believers realize that their hearts, their wills, their intentions, are perfect, they realize also the imperfection of their flesh.

The Apostle's argument therefore is, "If ye be led of the Spirit then are ye not under the Law." (Gal. 5:18.) That is to say, You who have accepted Christ, and who are now walking according to the new mind to the best of your ability, are following the lead of the Spirit, and you have nothing to do with the Law, and it cannot condemn you as imperfect because of your fleshly weaknesses, for you are protected under the robe of Christ's righteousness, and the divine arrangement is that so long as you are following the Spirit, following the new mind, seeking to walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit, that long you are justified, approved of the Lord, and the imperfections of your flesh that are contrary to your best endeavors are not charged to your account, but to the Lord Jesus's account. Those unwilling imperfections were all laid upon him who bore our sins in his own body on the tree, as his perfections have been applied to us through faith to cover those unwilling blemishes.

"Against Such There Is No Law"

While the Law Covenant was nailed to Jesus' cross it does not mean that there is no law covering the Lord's people. The very essence of the divine law is love for God and for man, and the Apostle points out that our course as Christians walking after the Spirit of Christ would be condemned by no law of God; but on the contrary, if neglecting our consecration to the Lord we walk after the flesh, there would be condemnation against us because judged according to the Spirit, the intention of our hearts, we are either approved or disapproved by the divine law of love.

The works of the flesh the Apostle enumerates, and they are all violations of the law of love under which the New Creatures in Christ are being examined; they all come under the head of selfishness and imply injury to our fellow-creatures. He enumerates these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, malice, wrath, strife, divisions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like. The Apostle points out that any one begotten of the Spirit who walks, that is who lives, along the lines of these works of the flesh need have no hope of any share in the Kingdom of Heaven. He does not say that all such would share in the Second Death, but we know of a surety how such conduct persisted in would ultimately result in the Second Death. It is sufficient for our purpose, however, to leave the matter where the Apostle does, and to note that there is no prospect for a share in the Kingdom for any who do these works of the flesh and of the devil.

It is unfortunate for some that they seem unable to realize the scope of this testimony; they seem to think of adultery, drunkenness and murder as being the crimes that would debar from a share in the Kingdom. They overlook the fact that the Lord defined adultery to be a desire to do evil where only the opportunity is lacking; that he defined murder as represented in that condition of heart which hates a brother. They overlook the statement of the Apostle in this very list that the spirit of variance, the spirit of ambition and jealousy, the spirit of envy and division, are spirits of the flesh and in opposition to the New Creature led by the holy Spirit. O, if all of the Lord's people could have in mind these searching tests and apply them to their own lives, what a profit would result, what a blessing, what a fleeing from these weaknesses of the old nature, what a fighting against them for the liberty of the New Creature and its final attainment to glory, honor and immortality with their Lord in the Kingdom!

The Fruit of the Spirit

Having pointed out to us what would constitute walking after the flesh, the Apostle next indicates the conditions and experiences which should assure the Lord's people that they are not only soldiers of the cross and followers of the Lamb, but that they are fighting a good fight, gaining victories over the flesh. He suggests that if we are begotten of the Spirit and guided thereby there will be a fruitage in our life which will be manifest to ourselves and should to some extent also be apparent to others. This "fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, temperance."

There is no law of God against these things, these qualities, these characteristics of the new nature, and very rarely will any law amongst men be found in opposition to them, although indirectly those who practice these things will be unpopular with the world as well as with the adversary and have trying experiences as a result—experiences, however, which persevered in will work out a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. On the contrary, he who lacks such fruit in his heart, in his mind, in his experiences, lacks the evidence which he should have of his faithfulness as a good soldier in warring against the old nature. He lacks therefore the full assurance of faith, without which as a New Creature he could not have peace and joy. It will be observed that all these fruits of the Spirit are contrary to selfishness. If the Lord's people could but come to the place where daily, morning, noon and night, they would have self-examinations to see to what extent they are growing these fruits of the Spirit and to what extent they are rooting out the works of the flesh, it would be to the comfort and joy of all who are in the right condition. Though it might be to the discouragement of others, it would be a discouragement which eventually would be to them advantageous and in the end would hinder them from making shipwreck.

"Crucified the Flesh"

Pursuing his subject, showing why we should fight against our natural desires and inclinations toward things that are selfish and sinful, the Apostle declared that they that are Christ's [his consecrated ones, prospective members of his Bride] have crucified the flesh, with the passions and lusts thereof. What does he mean?—that those who have accepted Christ as their sin offering, believing that the crucified one paid their ransom price, have counted their flesh in as though crucified with Christ, saying, Since sin cost the crucifixion of our Redeemer we will be opposed to sin and dead to sin forever. The thought is that whoever has clearly and intelligently accepted

Christ as his Savior from sin will be so opposed to sin that he will count his own flesh as condemned to death and be hoping for the new body, the spiritual, and be willing that his flesh should die a lingering death until the last gasp, so strong will be his opposition to sin and everything allied therewith, so strong will his sympathy be with God and the Redeemer, and the holiness which they represent.

"If we live in the Spirit let us also walk in the Spirit," the Apostle adds. That is to say, begotten of the Spirit we reckon ourselves New Creatures, spirit beings, not yet perfect. To us old things are passed away, the things of sin, and all things have become new in harmony with the exceeding great and precious hopes which have been begotten in us by the Lord's promises. If these be true, let us walk, let us live our daily life accordingly, in harmony wtih this thought—as New Creatures in Christ, not as men energized by their ambitions or projects, not as taking pleasure in the things contrary to the new nature.

"Provoking One Another"

As before suggested, while our difficulties arise from our own fallen flesh, they are apt to manifest themselves in the affairs of the Church. The old spirit of selfishness inclines to be ambitious for influence, power, authority, glory amongst the brethren, overlooking the fact that such vainglory and envyings are entirely contrary to the Spirit of the Lord, by which we have been begotten—entirely overlooking the fact that while this ambitious spirit dominates us in any measure we are unfit for the Kingdom and will have proportionately less and less of the Lord's favor and blessing and guidance in our hearts and heads. Hence the apostle urges, "Let us not be vainglorious, provoking one another, envying one another." Whoever manifests a vainglorious spirit tempts another in the same direction through retaliation, and thus there is a provoking or inciting to an evil course; whereas the Apostle urges, on the contrary, that the New Creatures in Christ should provoke or incite one another to love and good works, that would be to their mutual advantage and development.

"God Is Not Mocked"

The compilers of this lesson here introduce Galatians 6:7, 8 very appropriately. The theme is the same. We might succeed in deceiving ourselves, possibly succeed in deceiving others into thinking that we are spiritual, walking after the Spirit, while really heady, highminded, vainglorious and envious, but, says the Apostle, we could never deceive God. For such to claim that they were walking after the Spirit and not after the flesh would be mocking God, would imply that God could not read the heart and discern the motive. And the Apostle suggests that in God's arrangement we are sure to reap the very crop we sow. If, in our daily intercourse with the family, the brethren and the world, we allow the envious, selfish, vainglorious, ambitious spirit to control, with more or less of anger, hatred, strife, and dissension, we may surely expect the legitimate crop will not become the reverse of this; instead of finding ourselves in the resurrection copies of God's dear Son, we will find ourselves wholly unfit for the company of the elect.

But, on the other hand, if we sow to the Spirit—that is, if in the daily affairs of life we seek to have our hearts and minds in full accord and sympathy with the Spirit of the Lord, as presented to us in his Word and exemplified in our Redeemer and the apostles—then we may have the assurance with God that he will not forget us however weak we may be, however insignificant according to the flesh, but we will be remembered of him in the resurrection and be granted a share with all the overcomers in his Kingdom; we will reap of the Spirit the spiritual body, as the Apostle intimates, "For he that soweth unto his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption, death; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. We are to remember, however, that this sowing and reaping is done by the New Creature, the new mind, the new will, and not by the flesh. However weak and imperfect the flesh may be. God judgeth us not thereby. On the contrary, he looketh upon the heart, upon the intention, upon the will, and his reward or condemnation will be according to what our hearts have desired and endeavored. He will count us as victors if loyally and firmly we endure hardness as good soldiers, faithful to the end.—Z. '06:295-299.

"Drink Ye All of It"

"Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of?"—Matthew 20:22.

THE incident which is narrated in our context occurred just previous to our Lord's death. He had gone up to Jerusalem. He had made the triumphal entry into the city. Now He was waiting for the grand climax of His experiences. He had forewarned His disciples and had explained to them that the chief priests would deliver Him up to be crucified.

But the Apostles in general did not understand the Lord's words. On many occasions His words had been figurative. So now they wondered what He meant. They did not know what kind of figure of speech this could be. They thought that He was near to sitting on His Throne, and that they would be with Him. So thoroughly were they convinced that the establishment of the Kingdom was at hand that St. James and St. John—their mother acting as spokesman, advocate—had asked that when He came into His Kingdom they two might sit near Him, the one on His right hand, and the other on His left. They were expecting that in a day or two important events would take place which would bring them into the Kingdom.

Our Lord's answer to this request was intended not only for the disciples there before Him, but undoubtedly for all His disciples throughout the Gospel Age, to set before them the conditions on which the Kingdom was to be attained. Our Lord stated the matter very plainly, asking James and John, "Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" They did not understand these words in full, but perceived that it meant some kind of death. "Are you able?"—Are you willing? They replied that they were.

The word **able**, while it contains the thought of force, strength, nevertheless expresses willingness; for it refers to the **will**. The thought is not, Are ye physically able?—but, Are ye mentally able? This thought would properly be represented by the word willing. Are your wills strong enough? The two disciples determined that they were. "Yes, Lord, we have a will to do the whole thing, whatever it may be." They were fully given up to the Lord, to do His will. They would be willing for anything. They had such appreciation of the Kingdom, and such confidence in the Lord that whatever **He** was about to do **they** were willing to do.

Our Lord's Real Baptism

And so it is with us. Our wills are made up. "Are ye able?" Surely! There is not a doubt—nothing to interfere. That which the disciples could not understand, and which we could not have understood had we been in their places, we fully understand now, because we have the assistance of the Holy Spirit to guide and help us in the understanding of the deep things of God. We see that the Lord meant that He was immersed into death. At the beginning of His ministry, He gave up all of His earthly interests in every sense of the word. This was His sacrifice. It was **symbolized** by baptism into **water**, but it was **really** a baptism into **death**. He had been fulfilling that baptism for three and a half years; and the next day He would die, as He well knew. "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened until it be accomplished!"—Luke 12:50.

The thought is, "I am feeling greatly straitened until that baptism be accomplished. It will be accomplished tomorrow. I find that connected with that death there are difficulties that I had not expected. I am anxiously waiting for tomorrow, for the completion of My sacrificial death."

Our Lord had not supposed that His consecration to death would mean a death of such serious indignity, humiliation and misrepresentation of His character—an ignominious death. He had known that He was to be crucified, had told His disciples so and was entirely willing thus to die. But as He got down to the core of the matter, He saw that the arrangements were that He was to die the death of **a criminal**. It was an entirely different matter to be crucified as a criminal. Because He was a good man, it was most trying to Him to be arrested as **a blasphemer**—one guilty of the worst crime known to the Jews. To be condemned on the charge of **blasphemy** and to be led by His own countrymen to be put to death, when He was really giving up all that He had for the service of God, was a terrible ordeal for Him—much more of a test for Him than it would have been for one who had been tainted with sin, and who was less sensitive because of his wrong life. Jesus seems frequently to have referred to this cup, as if He instinctively shrank from the experience.

The Church's Cup of Experience

In a broad sense, the figurative expression, **cup of experience**, might be used in referring to every affair of our lives. But this is apparently not the way in which Jesus was using this word at this time. He used it in respect to something in the future. "Are ye able to drink of the cup that **I shall** drink of?"—in the future—that cup which I shall drink within the next few hours. That cup was a terrible draft to Him—not the **dying**, not the **cross**. He had not asked that He might be spared the dying, that He might avoid death. But He had asked that this bitter cup of ignominy, that He should be put to death as a **blasphemer**, might be set aside; and yet He said, "The cup which My Father hath poured for Me, shall I not drink it?" After He had cried out with strong cryings to God and had received the assurances of God's favor, He was then ready to drink of this cup.

So it is with the Lord's followers. It is hard that our good should be evil spoken of, that we should be declared to be poisonous to every religious sentiment. This is a part of our experience. To have people separate us from their company would be a trifling thing. To die in some respectable way would be a small matter. But to be put into a false light, to have our good made out to be evil, these are trying experiences. Our attitude is to be the same as that of our Master, "The cup that our Lord shall pour, shall we not drink it?" "We have the word of the Apostle that all things shall work for good to those who love God, to the called according to His purpose. With these thoughts before our minds, we are to be of good courage and to accept the cup of experience which the Lord has for us. We know not how near that cup may be. Perhaps with the Church it is the same as with Himself. Perhaps there will be a measure of acknowledgment that we are right about the Divine Plan. Then through the machinations of the church systems we may be delivered up—possibly to death.

The Test Now Upon the Church

The disciples at the First Advent did not realize how near they were to the experiences of Gethsemane and Calvary. It may be so with us now, for aught we know. Therefore we realize the importance of our lives being such as the Lord has marked out for us. Watch ye, lest ye fall in the hour of temptation! The hour of temptation was upon them; therefore it was important that they keep themselves in the right attitude. And so should we do now. There may be peculiar tests, which the Lord may not wish us to know—they would not be such tests if we knew of them in advance. Therefore we should be on guard that we may be found loyal and faithful, and that we may demonstrate our faithfulness unto death in the way that the Lord has prepared for us.

It would appear as though the present time may be one in which the Lord is giving His people a test of a new kind. Even though we see the Gentile nations in process of disintegration, there is an opportunity for some to doubt the whole matter and to say, "There have been wars before, and I suppose there will be wars yet! This is not the end of the Gentile Times, as I thought it would be." Such people, if they had been engaged in the Lord's service, might leave it and go into worldly society, or become engrossed in business, or what not. This is most particularly the very time in which such testings might come. Therefore we should be on our guard lest any spirit of doubt come upon us. "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation."—Z. '14: 382, 383.

Patient Endurance the Final Test

"Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."—James 1:4.

THE Scriptures everywhere represent patience as an important element of character. In every phase of human experience we can see its need. To be just under present conditions, one must be patient, not rash; for it would be unjust to be impatient and severe with the unavoidable imperfections and weaknesses of our fellowmen. Therefore the spirit of a sound mind demands that we be patient in dealing with fallen humanity. God Himself possesses this quality of patience, and has long exercised it. In dealing with the world in the next Age the Church will need to have much patience, and under our present environments we need it constantly in order to develop the character necessary for a place on the Throne with our Lord.

Patience is closely allied to love and mercy. If God were unloving, unmerciful, He would be without patience. In man's present blemished, fallen condition, patience is sadly lacking, although it is often exercised outwardly for policy's sake. This Godlike quality, like all the other qualities of character inherent in God and in all perfect beings created in His likeness, has been largely obliterated in humanity by the fall of the first pair.

In the New Testament there are two Greek words translated **patience.** One of these words signifies forbearance, longsuffering. The other carries the thought of cheerful or hopeful endurance. The latter is the word used in our text, and has a much deeper significance than attaches ordinarily to our word patience. This constancy—the endurance of evil in a cheerful, willing manner—represents an element of character, and not merely a temporary restraint of feeling or of action. It signifies a development of heart and character which manifests itself in an endurance of wrong or affliction with contentment, without rebellion of will, with full acquiescence in the requirement of Divine Wisdom and Love, which, while permitting present evils, has promised in due time to overthrow them.

It will surely be profitable for us to cultivate carefully this element of Christian character of which our Lord speaks in such high commendation, and without which, His Word assures us, our character cannot be perfected. The Christian requires patient endurance to put on the whole armor of God, and having put it on, to keep it securely buckled. We need it in dealing not only with others, but also with ourselves, with our own blemishes. We should always take into account the various circumstances and conditions surrounding ourselves and others. As we look around, we see that the world is in a condition of blight, of sin. This knowledge should give us great sympathy with humanity, without which we would have but little patience. All of our brethren in Christ, like ourselves, are by nature members of this fallen human race. Therefore we should have a great deal of patient endurance with the Lord's people, as we would have them exercise this grace toward us.

The Patience of God

As the quality of justice will always persist, so will the quality of patience, though not in the sense of patient endurance of evil. God patiently works out His own glorious designs, in perfect equipoise of mind. At present this requires the exercise of patient endurance with evil, sinful conditions; and in the Ages of glory to come God will, we believe, still work out His purposes in perfect patience, probably in worlds yet uninhabited.

But in the exercise of patience under present evil conditions, Wisdom must have a voice. God has declared that in His Wisdom the time will come when He will cease to exercise patience toward the world. That is to say, He will no longer bear with the world in their present sinful, imperfect condition. That time has almost arrived. The great cataclysm of trouble, now about due, will sweep away the entire present order preparatory to the establishment of the Kingdom of God under the whole heavens. Then God will give men the fullest opportunity of coming into harmony with Himself and righteousness before He will deal with them summarily.

The time is coming when there will be no more sin. God will have a clean universe by and by. But He will first give everybody an opportunity to rise out of sin. If they will not avail themselves of the opportunity, then God's patience, longsuffering, will cease to be operative toward such. This will not mean that God's patience has ceased, but that its activity has ceased in that direction.

God's patience has arranged the thousand years of Messiah's Reign for man's blessing, and His Wisdom has decided that those thousand years will be sufficient for the elimination of evil. Whoever will not learn to live righteously under those favorable conditions would never learn, and it would not be the part of Divine Wisdom longer to exercise patience with such. Likewise also, in our dealings with ourselves and others, there is a limit to the proper exercise of patience—longsuffering. We should not be patient with ourselves beyond a certain point. There are circumstances in which we would properly feel that we should have **known** better and should have **done** better than we did.

Let Us Judge Ourselves

If a child of God realizes that he has been derelict with himself, he should say, I will not be patient with myself any further. I will take myself in hand and conquer this weakness which I have permitted in a measure to assert itself to the weakening of my own character and probably to the discomfort and pain of others. I cannot do this in my own unaided strength, but by the grace of the Lord I am determined to overcome in this matter.

Parents require much patience, forbearance, in dealing with their children. The limit of patience might differ in regard to different children. Therefore the wise parent will judge how nearly each child has been doing the right thing, and how well each has received and profited by instruction. If he finds that any child of his is wilfully doing wrong, he should not continue to be patient, but should administer the rod. This would not mean that the parent had ceased to be patient. He might have patience the next day with the same child, and subsequently the application of the rod might come again. We are rather to be too patient, too sympathetic, than to have too little patience, too little sympathy. Remembering our own weaknesses, we are to exercise patience toward others who are seeking to overcome their own imperfections, even as we are seeking to overcome our own. We all need that patience, forbearance, be exercised toward us.

Our Lord's Lessons on Patient Endurance

Recurring to the word patience as used in our text, let us glance backward to our Lord's Parable of the Sower, as recorded in Luke 8. In verse 15 we read, "That on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the Word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience," patient endurance, constancy. The thought here is that to be of the fruit-bearing class which the Lord will approve and accept in His Kingdom we must do more than to receive the Word of His Testimony, even though we receive it with joy. It means more; for the stony ground class at first thus received it. For a brief time these seemed to give evidence of fruitfulness and vigor; but when the hot sun of persecution arose, they withered away, because of lack of depth of soil.

In this parable the Lord shows that patient endurance, constancy, is the final test of character. It follows after the receiving and the sprouting of the seed; it follows after love, hope, joy and faith have caused the seed to spring forth and begin to bear fruit. Patient endurance, then, is necessary in order that the fruit may be developed and thoroughly ripened, that the grain may be made ready for the garner. Ah, how important this grace is seen to be, in the light of God's Word! But remember that the endurance must be **cheerful**. We cannot suppose that He who judges the thoughts and intents of the heart would be pleased with His children, even when He saw them bearing much for His sake, if they endured it in an impatient or dissatisfied or unhappy frame of mind.

Those who thus endure surely would not be copies of God's dear Son, whose sentiment found expression in the words, "I **delight** to do Thy will, O My God!" All of the Royal Priesthood are sacrificers, as was our great Chief Priest; and God who accepts our sacrifices through the merit of our dear Redeemer, informs us that He loves a **cheerful** giver—one who performs his sacrifices gladly, with a willing heart. This does not mean that our bodies will never grow weary; but that our spirit will rejoice in the privilege of suffering weariness of the flesh in so noble and wonderful a service. But if our Father should see best to lay us aside from active work for a time, when our hearts are longing to serve, this too will be an opportunity to endure cheerfully His will for us. It may also be a test of our full submission of our wills to His, and thus be an important stepping-stone upward toward the Kingdom glories and privileges.

The other instance in which the Lord used this word patience, or patient endurance, is recorded in Luke 21:19. He had just been telling His followers that they must expect tribulations as the result of being His disciples during the present time, when sin abounds, when Satan is the prince of this world. They must expect opposition from various quarters; but He assured them that nevertheless they would be fully under Divine care and protection, even though persecutions would be permitted to reach and to affect them. Then follow the words, "In your patience [patient endurance, cheerful constancy] possess ye your souls."—Luke 21:19.

Our faith and our trust in the Lord and His gracious promises should be so strong and unwavering that they will far more than counterbalance the oppositions of the world, of false brethren, and of Satan's blinded servants. So implicit should be our faith in our Father's love and care that all these persecutions will be recognized and rejoiced in as the agencies of His providence in chiseling, shaping and polishing us as living stones for the glorious Temple which He is constructing, and which is now so soon, we believe, to be set up.

Viewing our trials from this standpoint, we can indeed rejoice and can possess our souls, our lives, as New Creatures, even amidst tribulations, with cheerful endurance. Yea, we may realize that the soul, the real being, to whom God has given the "exceeding great and precious promises" of the future, cannot be injured by the persecutions of the flesh, or by anything that man can do unto us, so long as we are faithful to the Lord, accepting every experience that He permits to come to us as ministrations of His providence for our ultimate good and His glory.

The Necessity for Patient Endurance

Let us here examine carefully into the reason why it is necessary for us to develop this grace of patient endurance. It appears that the development of this quality is one of the conditions which God has attached to the call to joint-heirship with our Lord in the Kingdom, and one of the same conditions required of Him. The wisdom of this is manifest when we consider the work to which we are called—the work of blessing all the families of the earth, as God's Millennial Kingdom, in joint-heirship with the Only Begotten Son of God, our great Redeemer. That will be a mighty work; and it is eminently proper that Jehovah should require that those whom He shall account worthy of that exalted position shall not only appreciate His goodness and His glorious character, and prefer His service to sin and iniquity, but demonstrate their thorough loyalty to the principles of righteousness and to His will to the extent of a joyful willingness to suffer on behalf of these principles. A transitory endurance of one or two or three brief trials would not prove the individual to have an established character for righteousness; but a patient, cheerful, endurance even unto death would be necessary to demonstrate such a character.

We might illustrate this with the diamond. Suppose that we were able to make diamonds out of some plastic material with the brilliancy of the real diamond; and suppose that they became hard, but not so hard as the genuine diamond. Would these imitation diamonds have the value of the true diamond? By no means. If they were subjected to severe pressure, they would be crushed. And so with the Christian. If we supposed him possessed of every grace of character that could belong to the sons of God, save this one of firmness, endurance, he would not be fit to be amongst the Lord's jewels. Hence we see the necessity of the Lord's demand that patient, cheerful endurance shall be a characteristic of each one who shall be accepted to a place in His Royal Diadem.

The importance of this quality in the Christian character is again emphasized by the Apostle Paul. In His Epistle to Titus (2:2), when enumerating the character-qualities of an advanced Christian, he declares that they must be "vigilant, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in love, in patience." The final test of patient endurance must be passed before we can be accepted as of the Very Elect.

The same Apostle in writing to Timothy, thus reminds him, "Thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, patient endurance." We need this important grace more and more. Feet grow weary; trials and testings abound; therefore we need to "gird up the loins of our mind" and, looking to our great Exemplar for the needed inspiration and strength, to set our faces like a flint for the home stretch.

Trials Absolutely Essential

Our ability and strength to patiently endure should increase as we progress in the narrow way. We should grow "strong in the Lord and in the power of His might." But we cannot possibly develop this essential trait of character without trials—experiences intended to call for the exercise of cheerful endurance. So let us not think it strange if we are called upon to pass through protracted trials which make necessary the nerving of ourselves to bear. But let us repeat that the virtue is not merely in the bearing; for the world has much to bear, but it is particularly in the manner in which we endure. At heart we must be sweet and submissive—in fullest harmony with the Lord's processes of development. This may be hard at times; but His grace will be sufficient, if we constantly apply for it. "Having done all," let us "stand!"

Ah, yes! We can see a new reason for the Lord's arrangement that we should have our trial as our Master had His—under an evil environment—that we might not only have all the necessary qualities of Christian character, but have them rooted, grounded, fixed, established.

The Apostle James likewise draws our attention to the importance of this quality. He says, "The trying of your faith worketh patience"; that is to say, if our faith stands the trial, it will work out in our character this patient endurance. On the other hand, if we do not attain this development, it will mean that our faith has not stood the test satisfactorily, and that we are not fit for the Kingdom. Thus we see clearly what a great mistake has been made among Christian people in general in supposing that religion is a thing to be gotten suddenly as an answer to prayer, or by going to the mourner's bench, or by standing up for prayers, or in response to some Divine or human appeal—just as one would get a dollar and put it into his pocket. On the contrary, the step of repentance from sin and justification is only the beginning, and not the end, of the Christian way. The next step is consecration of ourselves and our all to God. But this also is far from the end. Not only must we go on and on, to the attainment of faith, fortitude, self-control, meekness and love, but having attained all these, we must **patiently endure.** We must "run with patience [cheerful endurance] the race set before us." Or, to use another figure of speech, it is merely starting in the School of Christ; merely having our names enrolled as pupils, to be taught of the Lord.

"The Hour of Temptation"

The Church of the Philadelphia period were promised of the Lord that because of their faithfulness, because they had "kept the Word of My patience," they should be kept from "the hour of temptation" which was to come upon all the world a little later. The Church of Laodicea—the Church of our day—is not kept from entering into the "hour of temptation"; but we may be sure that we will be kept while **in** it, if we are faithful and true. Our dear Lord's special message to the Laodicean phase of the Church has been, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If any man hear My Voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me. To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with Me in My Throne."—Revelation 3:20, 21.

Though we are not spared from this hour of temptation, we have a counterbalancing blessing as a result of living in the time of our Lord's parousia. We may have His instruction, His dispensing to us of spiritual food, "meat in due season," in a manner and to a degree never before enjoyed by His saints. And, as we might expect, this greatest favor is offset by the subtle and severe trials and testings of this special "hour of temptation." If there was ever a time when patient endurance was needed by the Lord's faithful, it is **now.** If ever they needed the counsel, "In your patience possess ye your souls," they need it **now.** Those who are able to patiently

endure will **stand** in this evil day. All others will fall. As the Apostle forewarned us, the fiery ordeals of this day "will try every man's work, of what sort it is."

We find this quality of patient endurance lacking everywhere throughout Christendom today, even among the majority of the professed followers of Christ. It is becoming more and more scarce. Few wish to endure anything—for righteousness' sake, for Christ's sake, or for any one else's sake; and if endurance of anything unpleasant is absolutely necessary, the trial is borne with much of impatience, complaint and chafing. Moreover, a spirit of defiance and rebellion against everything like self-denial or resignation, a spirit of intense bitterness, is daily growing in the hearts of mankind.

This general tendency of the civilized world today toward non-endurance, impatience and rebellion against restraint necessarily has its influence upon those who are seeking to walk in the narrow way. Only by Divine grace can this tendency be successfully resisted, and progress be made toward the development of the likeness of Christ. This special grace, needed today by the Lord's children, will be withheld from those who are not walking close to the Lord, following in the footsteps of Jesus. It is because the professed followers of Christ are living so far from Him that we see today the tendencies are developing which we have noted amongst those who profess His name.

This spirit so prevalent is at the bottom of mob violence which is kept down largely by military force, in the outbreaks against law and order which we hear of so frequently. We may expect this spirit to continue to grow. There is a feeling amongst the masses that in the past they have been too patient, not sufficiently aggressive—the feeling that if they had taken things into their own hands long ago present conditions might have been averted. But those who have kept the Lord's Word of patient endurance, who have sought from Him the wisdom from on High, which is "first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy of entreatment, full of mercy and of good fruits," have learned that He has a due time in which His purposes shall be accomplished, and they are willing to abide His time patiently, knowing that it is best. They have learned that

"God's plans, like lilies white, unfold;
We must not tear the close-shut leaves apart,
Time will reveal the hidden heart of gold."

The Apostle counsels us respecting this "hour of temptation" which is now upon us. Its besetments and trials will be many, and some of them will be so subtle and deceptive that all who are not thoroughly rooted and grounded in the Truth will be carried away by the false arguments of those whom Satan is now permitted to use as his agents in trying all those who dwell upon the face of the whole earth. . . .

St. Paul's Picture of Present Conditions

The hour of trial is not coming alike upon all, for all of Christendom are not upon the same plane —mentally, morally or physically. The trial as it is coming upon Christendom in general, however, is pictured by the Apostle Paul in 2 Timothy 3:1-5. He here enumerates certain characteristics of this "hour of temptation." He says, "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come; for men shall be lovers of their own selves—covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers [enticers to strife], incontinent [not under restraint, impetuous], fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors [those who cannot be trusted, would sell out their best friends for selfish considerations], heady, highminded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, having a **form** of godliness, but denying the power thereof."

This is a graphic picture of present-day conditions in the Christian world, so-called. Because they received not the Truth in the love of it, therefore God has sent them "strong delusions, that they should believe a lie," and should be condemned thereby. This hour of temptation has not yet reached its greatest intensity, but we believe this stage will be reached in a very short time. Blessed are all they who have made the Lord, "even the most High, their Habitation." These shall not be moved; yet many of them will pass through most severe trials and temptations. Through the mails we learn of the struggles and prayers of many of God's children—some because of their own imperfections and frailties, and some because of the imperfections of others; and still others are tried because of earthly cares and burdens which they seem unable to fully overcome or to cast upon the Lord.

Let Us Have the Proper Fear

We sympathize with these dear ones, and counsel them as best we can, remembering the Master's words, "Blessed are ye that weep now; for ye shall laugh." (Luke 6:21.) Our heart is especially solicitous for those whose letters give evidence that they are in temptation, but realize it not—who are being swallowed up of ambition or business or other "cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches" —whose love for the Truth seems to be growing cooler instead of hotter, and who seem to feel less and see less than they did years ago. These seem to be sleeping when they should be watching and praying; and this hour of trial, we fear, is finding them unprepared; while some who are weeping, praying and striving are more like our dear Master in Gethsemane; and like Him, they will be strengthened for the final trial.

Let us each, dear brethren, be very solicitous for ourselves and for each other, and counting the prize held out to us as far dearer and more precious than all else beside, "Let us fear, lest a promise being left to us of entering into His rest, any of us should seem to come short of it." Let us so love all the Lord's dear children that their welfare will be our chief concern; and this will mean our own spiritual health. Yet we must not allow our love even for the brethren to hinder our fullest confidence in the Lord's love and wisdom in the choice of His Bride, even though siftings should take from us some whose fellowship we have cherished.

Let us patiently hold on our way—this blessed way! Let us do with our might what our hands find to do. Soon will come the Harvest Home! Soon, if faithful, we shall gather, as a glorious company, to go out no more forever. We shall come with rejoicing, bringing our sheaves with us! But let us remember that "we have need of **patience,** that after we have done the will of God, we might receive the promise!"—Hebrews 10:36.

"How light our trials then will seem!
How short our pilgrim way!
The life of earth a fitful dream,
Dispelled by dawning Day!

* * *

"Then peace, my heart! and hush, my tongue!
Be calm, my troubled breast;
Each passing hour prepares thee more
For everlasting rest!"—Z. '15:83-87.

Re "The Little Season"

THE highway of holiness will be opened up through Israel, through the Ancient Worthies, through the New Covenant made with them. That highway of holiness will lead from imperfection to perfection, justification, restituton of all that was lost in Adam and redeemed at Calvary. Thus gradually, as the famine drew the Egyptians to Joseph for the bread of life, so those Millennial conditions will draw all nations to Israel to obtain perfection and everlasting life.

The justification of the Millennial Age will not be a faith-justification, but an actual-justification, gradually attained under the New Covenant conditions, "Do and live;" but also under the merciful provision arranged through the Mediator of that New Covenant. During that Mediatorial Reign all refusing to come into harmony with the Kingdom arrangements will first of all fail to receive the special blessings that will then be given to the willing and obedient; and, persisting in their wrong course, they will ultimately be cut off in the Second Death without hope of recovery. With the conclusion of the Millennium all mankind will have reached the condition of actual justification, or perfection through the merit of Christ applied as Mediator of the New Covenant through Israel. And all the world of mankind then perfected will be Israelites, just as all nationalities come to the United States and here become citizens. Thus all nations during the Millennium will gradually flow to Israel and come under obedience to the New Covenant regulations and thus become Israelites indeed on the earthly plane.

When our Lord at the close of his Mediatorial Kingdom will deliver over the control to God the Father, he will deliver only **Israelites**—the seed of Abraham; as it is written, "I have constituted thee a father of many nations"; "Thy seed shall be as the sand of the seashore" for multitude. (Hosea 1:10.) Later on that great host of Abraham's seed, after having been delivered over to the Father perfect and thoroughly able to keep the Divine Law (without any allowances), will be tested by the liberation of Satan for a little season. The Adversary will go up on the breadth of the earth to deceive all—the number of all being "as the sand of the seashore." How many will prove unfaithful and fall into the snare he will be permitted to lay for them is not indicated; but God will not fully and completely receive any into eternal life without first testing them as respects their loyalty to himself and the principles of his righteousness. One of the very tests which he puts to the Church in the present time—testing us, however, not according to the flesh, but according to the spirit, according to the intents of the heart—is our obedience to his Word and Providences. Only the submissive will pass the inspection. All the heady and high-minded and self-willed will surely be rejected. "Let us, therefore, humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt us in due time."—1 Pet. 5:6; Z. '10:88.

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I note your second question, relative to our statement in The Watch Tower of March 1, 1910, page 88, second column—where we set forth that Satan's "little season" will be after Messiah shall have delivered up the Kingdom to the Father. It is true that some years ago we were not so clear on this point as now—less positive. The great Mediator will indeed "destroy from amongst the people" all who will not obey Him, throughout the Millennial Age; so that at the transfer of His Kingdom and the vacating of His Mediatorship, the world of mankind will be **perfect.** The Mediator will step from between God and man, and Divine tests will be applied, to prove, to demonstrate, the heart-faithful. The sentence upon the disloyal is: "There will come fire from God out of Heaven and destroy them." This indicates a testing and punishing by Divine Justice. This would not be possible so long as the Mediatorial Kingdom held sway. However, we understand that our Lord will be the Father's **Representative** in connection with that exhibition of Divine Justice which will follow His Mediatorship, just as He was the Father's **Representative** and Agent before He came into the world to be our Redeemer.

The trial will follow the thousand years of Christ's reign, at the conclusion of which He will deliver up the Kingdom to God, even the Father. Hence the loosing of Satan and the testing of the perfected race will be the result of their being turned over into the hands of absolute Justice, and in contradistinction to their having been in the hands of Mercy through the Mediator for a thousand years. That judgment, or test, therefore will be of the Father, of Justice—a similar test to that which originally came upon Father Adam.

However, it is written that all things are of the Father and by the Son. We are to understand that the Glorious Son of God will be the Father's active Agent in respect to that Judgment, as well as in all other matters. But it will be the Father's Judgment, or the Judgment of Justice, for the Son's Mediatorial Kingdom will have ended.—Z. '13:173.

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With Spiritual Israel it is particularly true that the Lord leads in the right way, in the best way; and that therefore all truly his people should be careful to note his leadings and quick in following them. In the end we will surely see that he has led us in the right way, however different that way may be from the one we would have chosen for ourselves. The difficulty with many is that the way that they take is not the one which the Lord led and hence not the best way, even though the Lord may overrule their waywardness so that it shall not work to them a great injury which otherwise might have been theirs. The more of the true knowledge of the Lord we possess—the more of the knowledge which perfects our love for the Lord—the greater will be our faith, the more precious will be the results in this present life as well as in the life to come, in which—as star differeth from star in glory—the more faithful of the Lord's people, and more zealous and more Christlike will have the more shining, the more blessed part and experience. Let us then, with full faith in him who has led us hitherto, go forth through the coming days conquering and to conquer, fighting against the world, the flesh and the Adversary, strong not in ourselves but in him who has called us and led us hitherto.—Z. '07:287.

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The Lord's instruction to the new creation is that we should not only love righteousness, but hate iniquity; we should not only love and fellowship with all who are the Lord's people, but we should strictly avoid the fellowship of those who are not his people, who are enemies of righteousness. This does not mean that we are to hate the wicked, but that hating the wickedness, we will avoid any fellowship with those who are in sympathy with it, realizing that they are either blinded to the right or ensnared and influenced by the Adversary. What fellowship hath light with darkness, truth with error, righteousness with sin? Let all who love righteousness depart from iniquity: "Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord's house."—Z. '04:206.

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The truth is God's gift, but it is so given as to require the putting forth of energy on our part, which will demonstrate our need, our hunger, our appreciation of this "bread of life." Neither can we receive enough in one day or one month or one year to sustain us perpetually; we need to come to the Lord **daily**, and to receive from him through his Word and spirit the life-giving forces by which we may be sustained day by day in the trials of life.—Z. '02:202.

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JUSTICE FIRST—THEN LOVE

Let us, dear brethren, ever remember that while we are striving after Love and its bond of perfectness, nevertheless our own course of action should be squared first of all by absolute **justice**, and then love may add to that as much as it may please. . . . Love, in the sense of human sympathy, has no place in the deciding of questions where the Word of the Lord lays down the rules to be followed by each member of the Ecclesia. A failure to recognize principles of justice—righteousness—seems to lie at the foundation of nearly all Class difficulties. We request that all who get into such troubles take the matter to the Lord in prayer and then consider the matter along the lines of absolute **justice**.—Z. '16:206.

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It is not surprising that we find that those who are most active in serving the Truth and who thus indicate their special love for it and its authority, the Lord, should have special evidence of his love to them in their spiritual health and progress and keeping by his power.—Z. '07:165.

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The fact that the Lord has richly blessed us in the past while we were in the way with him is no guarantee that he will continue his favor with us after we have forsaken him. On the contrary his positive declaration is that he will withdraw his favor from all such.—Z. '07:318.

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Whatever may be the difficulties of the Lord's children in the near future, there will be a special comfort in remembering that the Lord is able to make full provision for all His true-hearted ones, and that He will do so.—Z. '15:376.

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"Where boasting ends, true dignity begins."—Z. '03:329.

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His words are, If ye being evil, being imperfect through the fall, more or less selfish in all of your thoughts and words and dealings, still would be disposed to give good gifts to your children, how much more would your heavenly Father give the good gift of all gifts, the holy Spirit, to them that ask him for it. The clear intimation is that this should be the essence of our petitions to our heavenly Father, for more of his holy Spirit, and that we should look to the experiences of life, its trials, disappointments, discouragements, oppositions, not as being really injurious to us, not as being stones, scorpions and serpents, but as being blessings in disguise, if we receive them in the proper spirit. The Lord is able to make all things abound in the interest of his children, the New Creatures in Christ Jesus. These know from experience that some of their severest trials and disappointments of an earthly kind have worked out for them development of character, elements of the holy Spirit, which they probably could not have so well received in any other manner.—Z. '06:207.

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